FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF ST WORLD
VOLUME 1 ISSUE 6 OCTOBER 1988
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ST ACTION

THE WORLD'S ONLY DEDICATED ST GAMES MAGAZINE

NEBULUS: AN STA EXCLUSIVE!

OVER 30 PAGES OF GAMES REVIEWED

SUPER HANG-ON,
ELIMINATOR
HELTER SKELTER,
STARGLIDER II, NETHERWORLD,
OVERLANDER, JET
SPACE HARRIER,
EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
SUMMER OLYMPIAD,
BOMB JACK, ZYNAPS
REVENGE OF DOH,
STREET FIGHTER
VECTORBALL AND
MANY, MANY MORE!

REGULARS:

INTERVIEW:
MIRRORSOFT
SEVEN PAGES OF
MEGATIPS,INCLUDING
A DUNGEON MASTER
SPECIAL FEATURE.

COMPETITIONS:

WIN THE FLIGHT OF A LIFE-
TIME IN A HOT AIR
BALLOON
SIGN UP FOR A TRIP INTO
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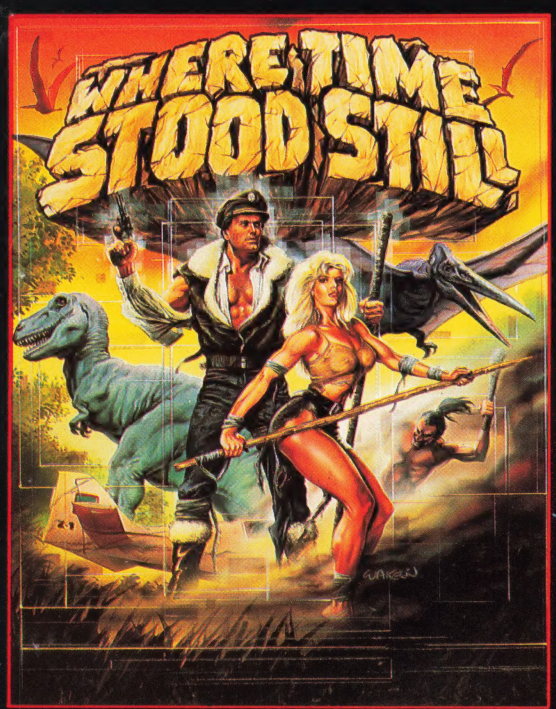
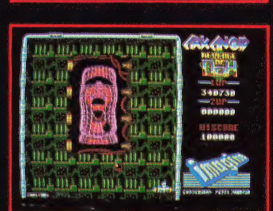


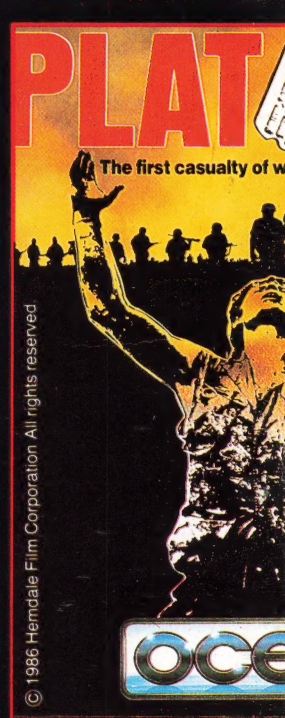
Your plane has ditched on a mountainous plateau somewhere in deepest Tibet. You and your companions are alive. A large shape moves toward you, you rub your eyes in disbelief; a Dinosaur! – where are you ... and when? Stunning, monochromatic 3D graphics and 4 way scrolling, give that '50's cinema mood as you learn not only to survive, but also that your companions are not all they first seemed!

FROM ocean

One phrase sums up the success and appeal of Arkanoid – "I'll just have another go!" Arkanoid is addictive! Using all the capabilities of the 16 bit micro this conversion is almost an exact replica with all the excitement of the original Taito coin-op smash hit. This is Arkanoid – the blockbuster.



FROM Imagine ..the name of the game



Exceptional graphics, innovative game design and digitised sound all add up to recreate the atmosphere generated in the box office smash hit. Closely following the original storyline you take your platoon, selecting individual men for assignment, who will encounter the enemy and their many booby traps as you seek to find the enemy's underground headquarters. On entering the warren of tunnels you will need flares and a keen eye – your enemy will lunge at you, from beneath the waters which flood the tunnel floor, wielding vicious knives – the atmosphere itself is enough to kill!

FROM

16 BIT STATE

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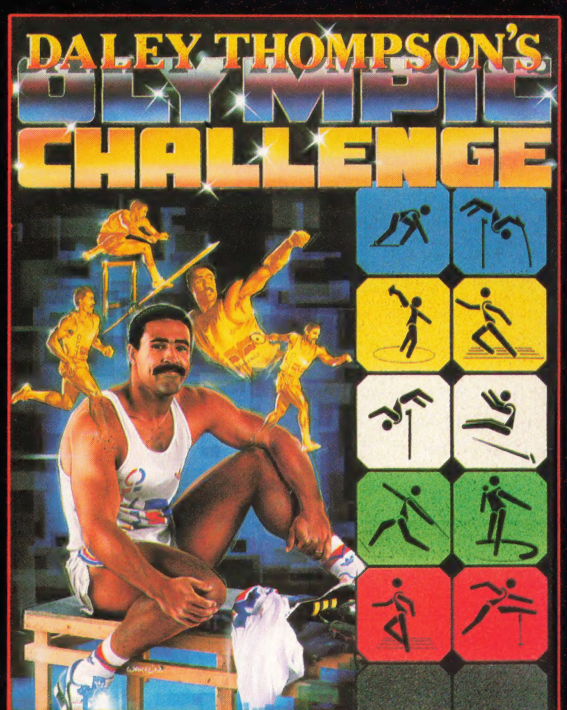
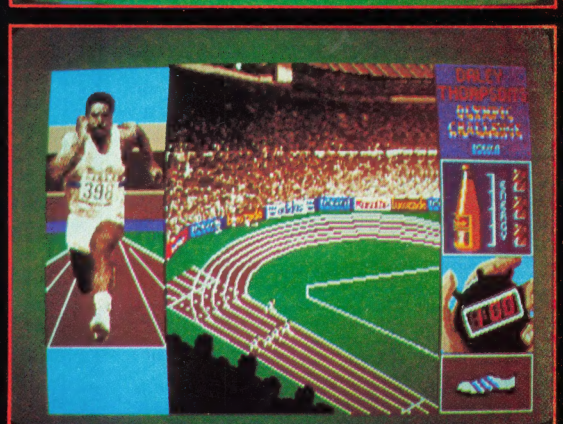
TERTAINMENT





DALEY IS BACK Enter the 1988 Olympic Challenge with Daley Thompson as you 'work out' in the gym, where your efforts will directly affect your performance in the competition itself – another first from Ocean.

Ten Olympic events include Long Jump, Shotput, High Jump, 100m Sprint, 400m, 110m Hurdles, Discus, Pole Vault, Javelin and 1500m. You will need all your skills to build on what you hope was, an impressive work-out, and, as is necessary for all top flight athletes, your judgement to select the most effective equipment for each event is now vital – a decision which can win or lose you a place on the podium.

This isn't just another sports simulation, this is a Daley Thompson 'event' where all his talent and humour burst through to make a thrilling and enter taining game play for all the family. Go for the Olympic Challenge!

FROM ocean

OF THE ART

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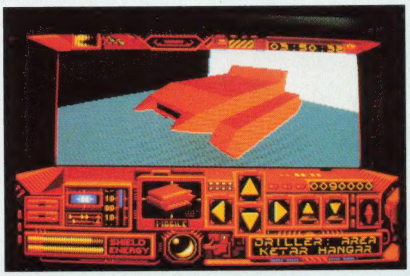
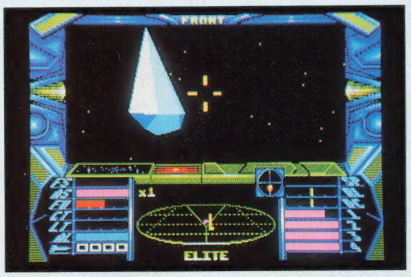
ACTION PACKED

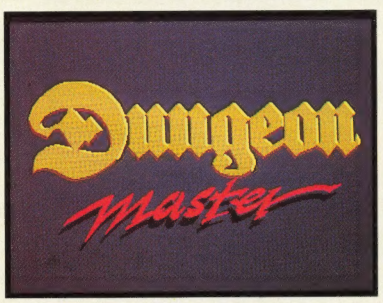
FEATURE ARTICLES





ACTION NEWS: Our roving reporter, Martin 'as an ex-flyer' Moth, investigates the latest gossip from Electronic Arts, Infogrammes, U.S. Gold-Pepsi, Ocean, Virgin, Electric Dreams, Infocom, Elite, Mirrorsoft, Tynesoft and Capcom, to name but a few.

4



DUNGEON MASTER MEGATIPS: In a Giving the Game Away special feature our regular tipster, Steve Merrett, enlists the help of Dungeon Master expert, Nick Clarkson, to bring you an STA megatips section all about this cult game

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MIRRORSOFT COMPANY PROFILE: Mirrorsoft have not really figured prominently as a household name in the entertainment software industry apart from the odd mega-hit, such as Dungeon Master. Visiting their premises just off Fleet Street, Martin Moth finds that all this is about to change with the advent of a new games label.

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MIRROR Soft

GIVING THE GAME AWAY: Steve Merrett has been sifting through all your tips, this month he comes up with hints for; Ikari Warriors, Rolling Thunder, Overlander, BDTA and Sidewinder to name but a few. Meanwhile,

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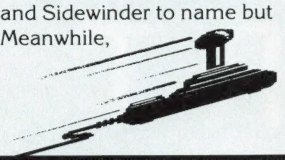

CASE FOR CONVERSION: This month Dennis Hemmings and Mark Smith decide to test their skill with Capcom's Black Tiger and Konami's Vulcan Venture.

78

REVIEWS

SUPER HANG ON" A 500 cc race-tuned engine throbs between you and the road, and only your skill on two wheels will take you to the front of the pack. Go too fast and you'll be picking gravel out of your kneecaps and elbows - go too slow and your macho 'Devil May Care' aftershave sponsor will drop you from the team for being a Nancy. So squeeze into those leathers, rev that bike up and whatever you do, HANG ON!

56

HELTER SKELTER: Nothing has been heard from Audiogenic since they released Impact, their breakout clone. But with the addictive Helter Skelter, have they started a whole new ball game?

37

EMPIRE STRIKES BACK: Star Wars is both a classic film and a classic computer game. Now, after what seems an eternity, Domark release its sequel. Will it be as big a hit as the original?

72

THE REVENGE OF DOH: Break Out clones are now two-a-penny. So will this sequel of a sequel rake in the "Doh" for Imagine?

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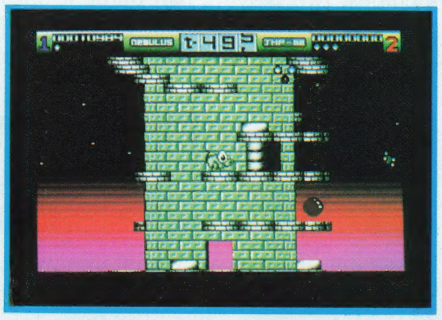
MORE REVIEWS



NEBULUS: John Philips has already impressed us once this month with his fast-moving Eliminator. With Nebulus he opts for a more sedate pace - will it be half as much fun?

28

HOTSHOT: Bored with basketball? Fed up with football? Well, Prism Leisure just might have the answer! They call it, "Hotshot".

62

STARGLIDER II: It is two years since Starglider soared onto the screens of startled ST users, who had been cruelly denied the stunning graphics and sounds that Amiga owners were enjoying. At once, Jez San and his team demonstrated the untapped capabilities of the machine and set an industry standard. But Argonaut Software set themselves a seemingly impossible task: improve on the original and produce a sequel!

68

VECTORBALL: MAD! That's what Mastertronic have decided to call their 16-bit software label! It stands for Mastertronic Added Dimension. But just what is this added dimension that the ex-budget boys profess to put in their software?

49

SPACE HARRIER: Dragon World is under attack! Don your trendy red Lacoste jumper and matching, winged boots and go and give 'em hell!

45

OVERLANDER: It seems that 1988 is going to be the year of the Roadblasters clone; a similar thing happened to Gauntlet last year.

38

BOMB JACK: Bomb Jack is, without a doubt, one of the most playable of the "Old School" games. Are we to expect a revival of licences that actually contain gameplay?

43

NETHERWORLD: Statesoft's "Boulder Dash" started an epidemic of clones, a few of which filter out in new releases even now. How nice it is to see something that takes the basic essence and adds to it.

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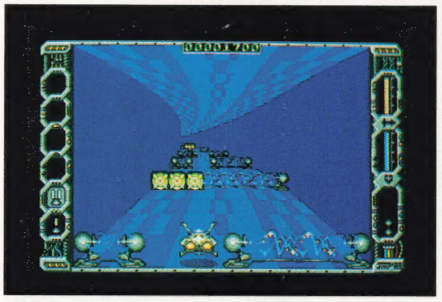

ELIMINATOR: With a title like Eliminator I was expecting the game to feature those cool, bearded rockers, ZZ Top - boy, was I in for a surprise!'

77

WHIRLIGIG: Huxley, Pascal and Einstein have all made educated guesses about time and space, but the chaps at Firebird have formed their own theory - they call it 'Whirligig'!

58

SUMMER OLYMPIAD 88: An entire generation of arcade frequenters were endowed with immense strength in their forearms, due to their addiction to the highly popular athletics game, Decathlon. These Popeye-like muscles were developed through vigorous left and right joystick manipulation which sent an endearing little athlete belting down a track or soaring over a vaulting horse. Now ST owners have a chance to wreck their joystick with Summer Olympiad 88.

64

JET: The F-16 fighter jet can fly at 2600 mph and, at MACH 2.5, she's practically ballistic - and oh, is this baby lethal! Fully-laden she carries enough armoury to destroy a city! Okay, you've bought Jet from SubLogic and you've read the 50-page instruction manual, but do you really think you can handle one of these birds?

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WHAT, MORE?

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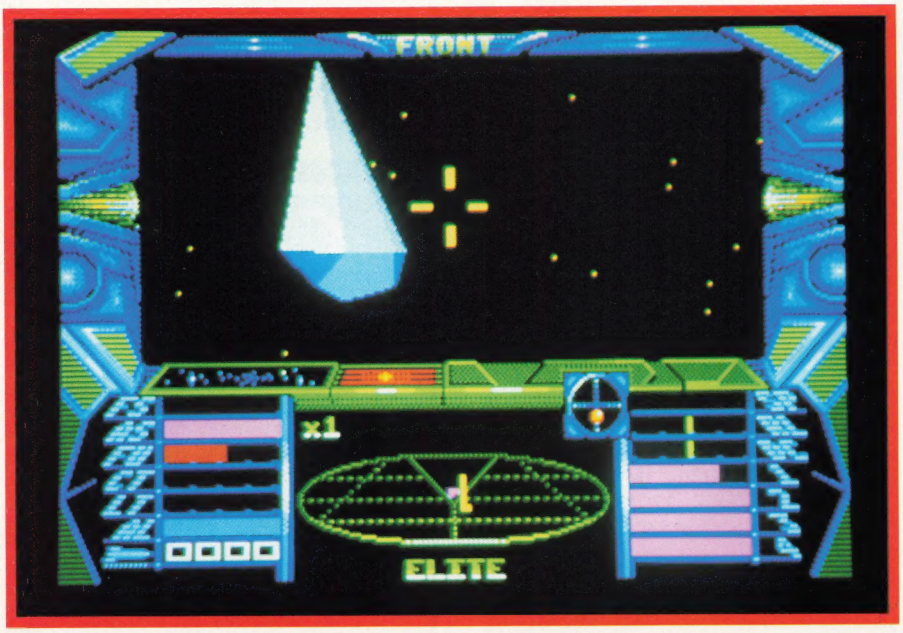
ACTION NEWS

ELITE ON THE ST - AT LAST!

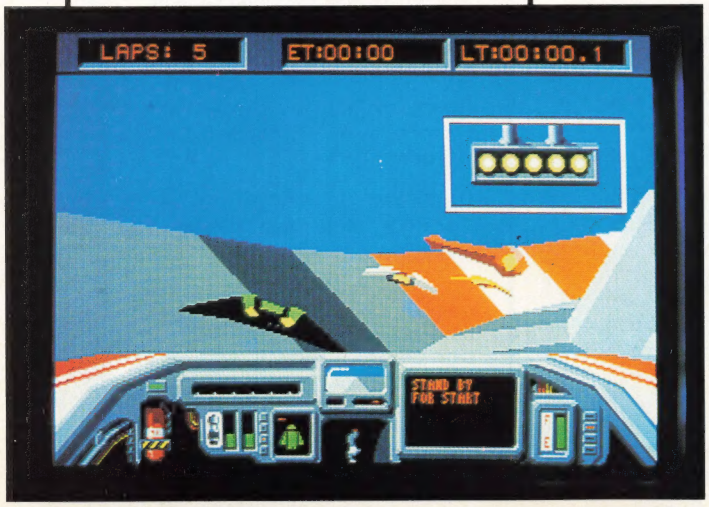
The long-awaited ST version of that 8-bit killer, Elite, is just about to hit the streets. This classic space trading and exploration game features smooth filled-in 3D graphics, and over 5 action-packed missions. Let battle commence!



POWERDROME

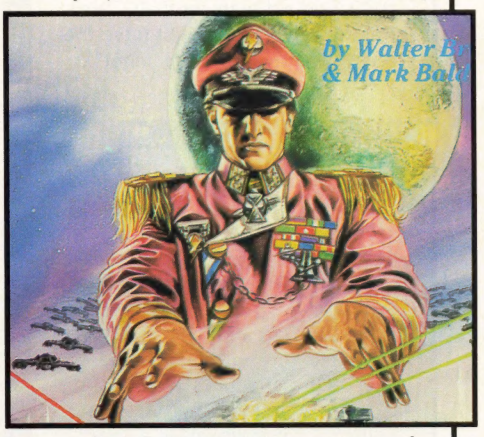
Electronic Arts has announced its first original program by a UK artist. Entitled, Powerdrome, and written by Michael Powell, the game is a futuristic racing simulation and gives the player the chance to become a 'jet racer pilot competing in the Powerdrome XXIV against four pilots from other galaxies'.

The game itself features fast-moving, solid 3D graphics and the courses consist of a three or four-sided track that winds its way up, down and around all sorts of blind corners in order to make it as difficult as possible for the player. The 3D representation of the track gives a very good impression of speed and movement, with most of the screen being utilised to give a large animated picture. Your craft is 'tuneable', thereby letting you adjust various features on the jet racer in order to extract maximum performance. An 'added extra' is the fact that, via a dual data link between two machines, two players can battle it out in style. Powerdrome is due for release at the end of September at a price of £24.95.



EMPIRE STRIKES - AGAIN!

Interstel, the American software house with distribution in the UK via Electronic Arts, has announced the release of Empire, a space simulation. They have billed it as the 'Wargame of the century' (not difficult as there are very few quality computer wargames on the market), the objective being to annihilate the enemy and gain total control of the world.



Trevor Sorenson, President of Interstel, noted: 'Empire is a strategic simulation of global conflict and empire building between two or three opposing forces'. To aid your war effort, you must allocate priorities to the production of various essential items, such as, troop transports, destroyers, subs, aircraft carriers and, of course, troops. Expect to see the game in the shops in late August at £24.95.

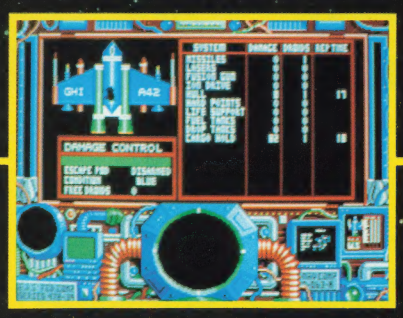
SUPER X TO BE STAR OF SHOW

The sky really is the limit for MicroProse this year as they are bringing Super X, the ultimate in flight sims for the leisure industry, to the PC Show at Earls Court. It is a fourteen-seat, hydraulically-controlled, million dollar

Your quest is interstellar wealth and to hell with glory

The universe stretches before you. 8 million worlds await your exploitation. Unimaginable wealth is your destiny if you can master the art of interstellar navigation, harness the intricacies of the photon drive and repel the deadly space pirates. Forget the medals, forget the honours, forget the glory. As a member of the Federation of Free Traders you live for money and will probably die for it.

FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS



Screen shots from Atari ST version.

ATARI ST/AMIGA

£29.99

GREMLIN

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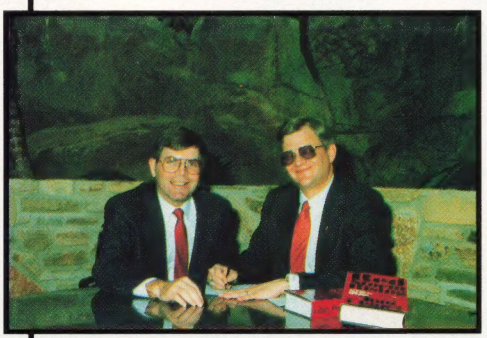
Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd.,
Alpha House, 10 Carver Street,
Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423

computer-controlled piece of high-tech that has had everyone who has 'flown' in it absolutely raving about the machine. Stewart Bell, MD of MicroProse UK, is understandably delighted at having acquired the machine for the PC Show. The bad news is that it is mainly there for their trade customers to fly in. The good news, however, is that it is possible to win a trip in it through a special promotion that MicroProse is r unning with 230 of the leading WH Smith stores.

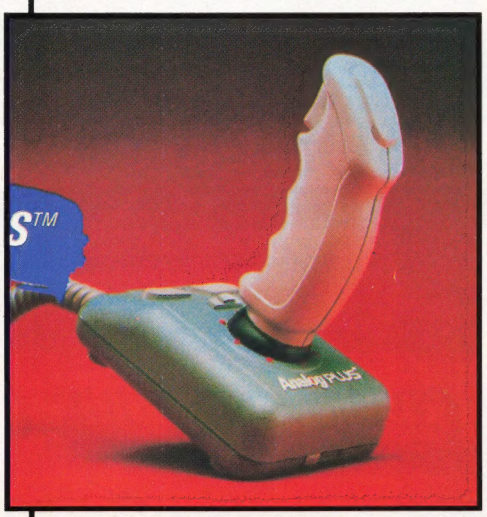
More from MicroProse

MicroProse, along with its joint ventures, will be showing a lot of products at this year's PC Show. To start with, MicroProse will be showing Red Storm Rising, the strategy game based around Tom Clancy's international best seller of the same name; Pirates, the ST version of the successful high-seas adven-



ture of other formats; Airborne Ranger, due out around Christmas; and Kennedy Approach, the Air Traffic Control simulation.

From Origin Systems, there will be Ultima V, the latest in a long line of adventures, and Times of Lore that was featured in a news item last month. Cosmi, MicroProse's latest joint venture, will be displaying The President is Missing, Defcon 5 and Navcom 6. These are all on other formats at the



moment but will most probably be re-written for the ST.

Suncom will be showing no less than twelve new additions to their joystick range. One example is the Tac 50, a digital, 'variable auto-fire' joystick. However, the 'sticks that are expected to steal the show' are their latest 'State of the Art' series of analog joysticks that use technology developed for deep space probes. These promise to fulfil what no other joystick can imitate - realistic flight simulation joystick movements. Coupled with appropriate software, this could be the answer that all manic flight-sim addicts, myself included, have been waiting for. If you are visiting the show, pay MicroProse a visit on stand 3227 and tell them I sent you.

PC Show gossip

I have it on good authority (although no doubt they will deny all knowledge of it) that Ocean are trying to get a TANK onto the floor of the PC Show at Earls Court! It will probably be a Sherman ta nk from the Second World War and is supposed to tie in with the sudden flurry of combat games from Ocean. As to whether or not you'll see the 30-ton metal beast is dependent on a number of factors, not the least being whether or not the floor can actually support that amount of weight! Wait and see...

Pepsi Gold

The Satellite Cafe, next door to the Palladium, was chosen as the venue for the announcement by U.S Gold that they will be running a joint promotional venture with Pepsi, the soft drinks company. The two companies wish to increase their market awareness in each others markets and, to this end, there will be cross-promotional tie-ins involving the purchase of U.S. Gold games and cans of Pepsi. There will be a competition at the PC Show sponsored by Pepsi and will feature a huge 'video-wall'. The show will also see the start of the Pepsi Challenge in the UK.

At the cafe, there was a Thunderblade arcade machine with which to tempt us journos into playing even more games - but this time for free. Not one to let the side down, I severely thrashed the previous high score gained by one of the chaps from CCI.

BT launch Fish

Telecomsoft are releasing Starglider II just after the PC Show. Verminator is currently down for a November release. Fish, an adventure, is due out at the end of October/beginning of November period, price £24.99. The screenshot is of the disco sequence - note the women on the far left of the

screen, now you know why it's called Fish. There's also Blazing Barrels, which used to be E.P.T., but incorporated a name change somewhere along the line.

Cop trouble

Mars Cops, from Arcana, has run into

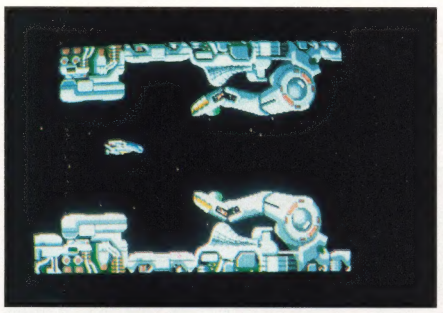
memory problems. They are not quite able to fit it all onto a 1040 at the moment, so there's quite a way to go before it will fit into a 520! They also have 'a couple of Top Secret projects' in progress at the moment, but resisted bribery and corruption and would, unfortunately, tell me nothing until 'later'.

STILL DREAMING

Those awfully nice chappies at Electric Dreams are developing 2200 A.D. for the ST. It is best described as a space strategy/adventure and in it, you play the part of a commander of a post-holocaust moonbase and are in charge of the only known colony of humans. You must take charge of the survivors and gradually build space probes to explore and colonize other planets. The ultimate objective being to re-colonize the Earth after the nuclear atmosphere has returned to normal.

I spoke to Dave, the product tester, and he is quietly getting very excited about it. 'I've been playtesting the PC version for quite a while now and, although the graphics are nowhere near as good as the ST's will be, the gameplay is engrossing. It's really easy to get into and then you're hooked!'. No date for release as yet.

Other games that are really look-



ing good are S.D.I., R-Type, Timescanner and The Incredible Shrinking Sphere (or ISS for short!). S.D.I and R-Type have already been covered in ST Action previously, so I won't go into all that again, other than to say they are both very addictive arcade games.

Timescanner is a computerised pinball machine that has two levels. They have an arcade version of the game in their offices at Southampton and I always have a go when I visit, it's so realistic - shou ld be one to look out for sometime in the New Year.

ISS is 'a really playable game, you'll like this one' according to Dave. It consists of 8 levels, each with four layers. You control a ball that can vary in mass and size according to various tiles that you run over. Obstacles, such as pinball-type bumpers, make it difficult for you in your task to find an exit to the next level. Enemies appear which have to be shot. Also, the path that you take starts to decay so that if you go over

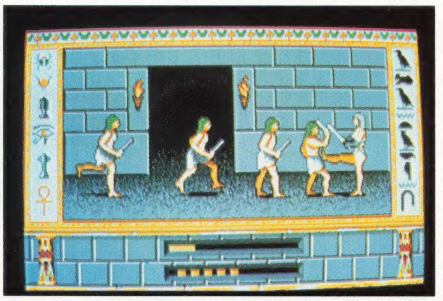
BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS

Software Horizons is a brand new software house that will be officially launched at this year's PC Show. They will be launching three games on to the ST market: Veteran, Luxor and Mafdet.

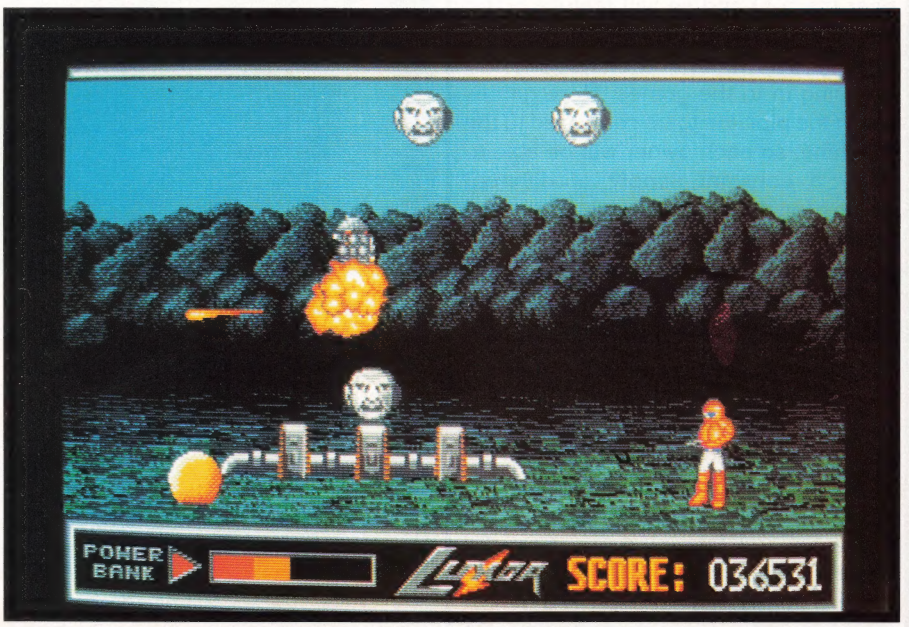
Veteran is a commando simulation. The game features digitised sound effects and three separate missions, the final one being the destruction of the enemy's headquarters. Mafdet is set in Egyptian mythology and you play the part of Mafdet the Egyptian cat goddess. The aim of the game is to search the lands of Egypt and the underworld for the key to your power - The Book of the Dead. Apparently, the game is based on an authentic Egyptian legend. Luxor is a Side-Arms type of game where you blast your way through space in search of a beautiful princess.

The good news is that all these games will be released at the pocket-pleasing price of £14.95.

Veteran the commando simulation



A couple of lush screen shots of Mafdet (it's set in Egypt don't you know!)



Luxor - a 'Side Arms' style blastem up

a tile once too often, you'll crash through and die. This makes it extremely difficult in later levels.

Info on Intec

The Intec Video System, the coin-op machine from East Midlands Leisure that utilises ST games, is now launched to the trade, so expect to see the odd one in your local pub, club etc. The idea is

brilliantly simple - place an ST in a normal video-game cabinet, add a coin-op system and a 21" hi-res colour monitor and, bingo, an arcade machine that can change games in a matter of minutes rather than the half-an-hour or so that normal coin-ops take to change.

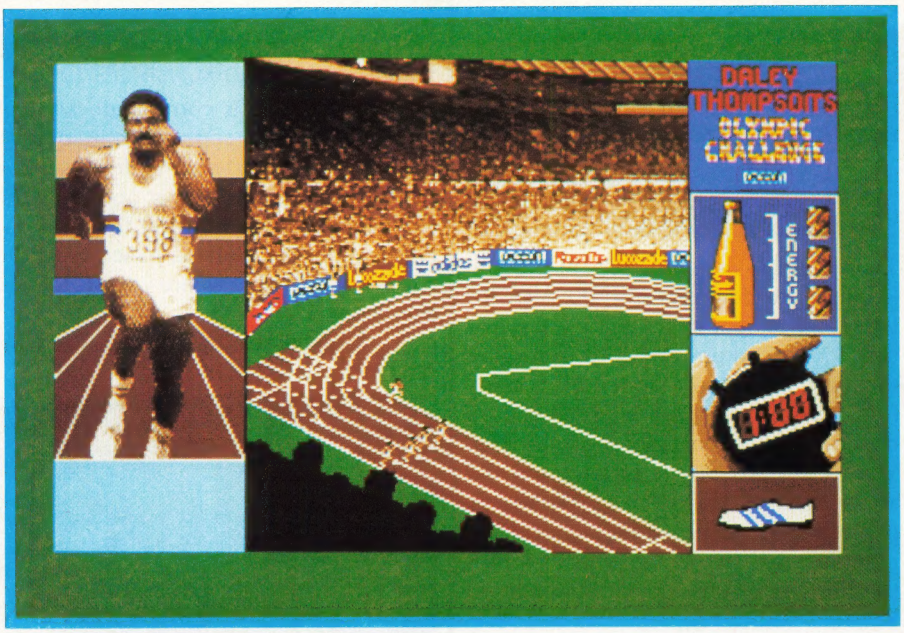
The first games to be made available for the machine are Leatherneck, Barbarian Ultimate Warrior, Leviathan, Backlash and Foundations Waste, with the possibility of Thundercats being signed up as I write this. With the internal workings consisting of 1 Meg of memory, the games are slightly re-written to make use of the extra memory over the 520 and so will feature better sound and synthesized speech, with the possibility of more and better graphics creeping in to the games. More games are in the pipeline to be converted to the machine, so each owner will be able to carry a constant supply of different games for the machine, which he can change at a moment's notice.

Shoot'em-up!

Classic Software are about to release a new game on the ST. Entitled Marksman, the game revolves around a handgun training course. Start with a .22 target pistol at 25 yards and then move back to 50 yards. Once competent, you move up to larger, more powerful weapons and pop-up targets. Finally, there is a hostage situation in a mock-up town with gunmen and innocent women and babies.

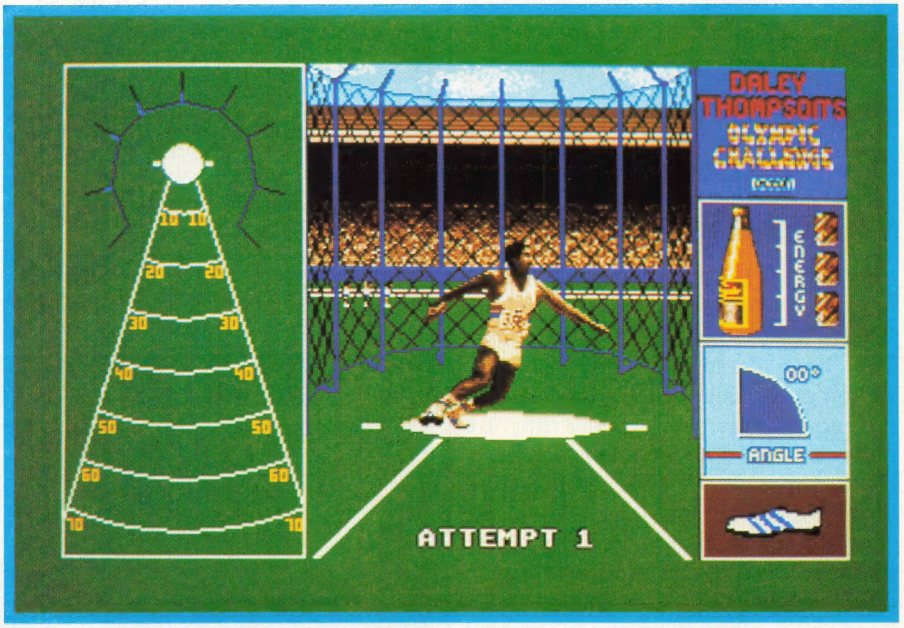
Another game in development for later in the year is Classic Sarcophagus, a game involving tombs and pyramids - more info on this later.

Ocean round-up



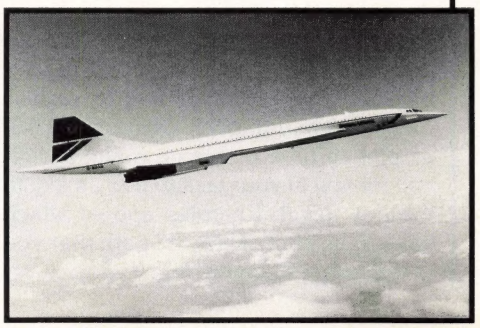
Ocean's long-awaited compilation disk will be released on 17 August. The package comprises Barbarian, Crazy Cars, Wizball, Rampage and Enduro Racer. Also for release is Where Time Stood Still. Daley Thompson's Olympic Challenge is due out in September. The game features the ten decathlon events and these are played under Olympic qualifying standards. Before entering any of the events, you must first complete a vigorous workout in the gym. One interesting point is that your energy is measured by the fullness of a Lucozade bottle! The game may give you hours of entertainment, but if you want triceps like Daley's, then I'm afraid you're going to have to do the real thing.

Operation Wolf, Typhoon (Konami coin-op conversion) and Rambo III are all due out around Christmas time. No screen shots as yet, but I'll keep you informed.



Skychase a Concorde trip

Sky Chase, the excellent combat flight sim from Imageworks (I should know, I played it non-stop when I visited Mirrorsoft the other week - totally addic-



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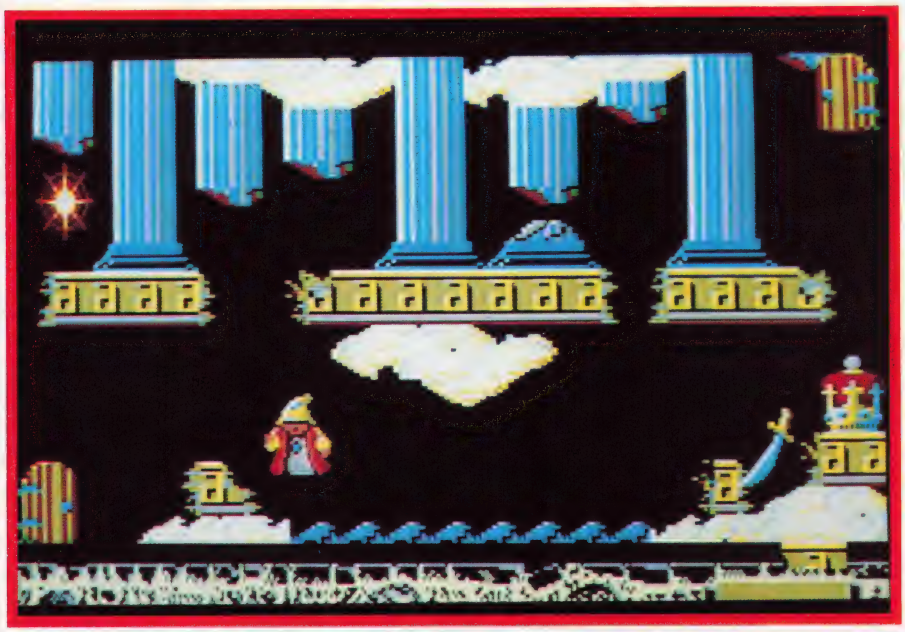
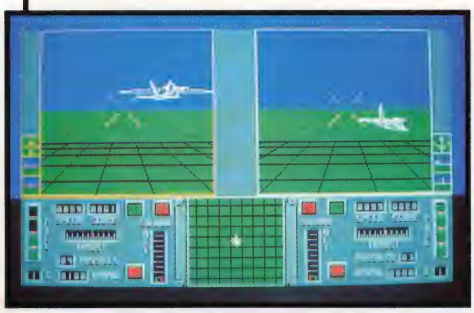


Air to ground with Digital Integration

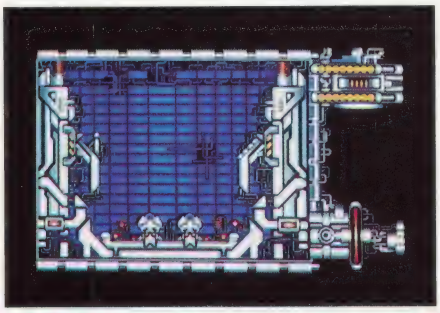
Digital Integration are developing three games for the ST for release towards the end of the year. ATF and F16 Combat Pilot, two flight simulations, and TT Racer, a motorbike racing simulation. At the time of going to press, they were not divulging any information on any of the games, saying that 'the time wasn't right'. Well, I thought that you'd at least want to hear about the products that they're developing.

tive!) will feature a competition in its packaging that will enable the winner and a companion to fly, in Concorde, out over the Atlantic. Meanwhile, expect the ST version to be out around September/October at £19.99



80 days to Outland

Interceptor are working on two games at the moment for the ST. Outland is a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up with parallax and a sampled sound track for those of yo u with double-sided drives. There is a simultaneous two-player option which should make things a little more hectic. The game is planned for release soon after the PC Show, with a running demo being shown at their stand. Another game in development is Around the World in 80 Days. No news on this at the moment but I hope to have a couple of screenshots for you.

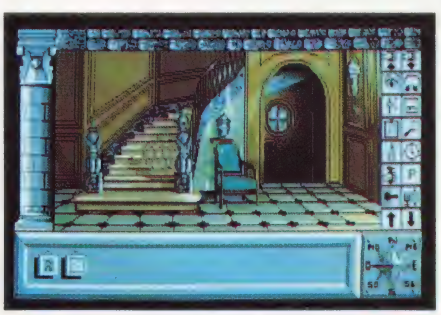


Action Service

Infogrames' Action Service is a commando school simulation due for a September release, priced £19.99. You control a commando and the objective is to guide him successfully through the assault course. Various obstacles are placed in your way to hamper progress - such is the nature of an assault course! A few interesting features are thrown in, such as, a replay option and an obstacle construction kit.

Chrono-quest

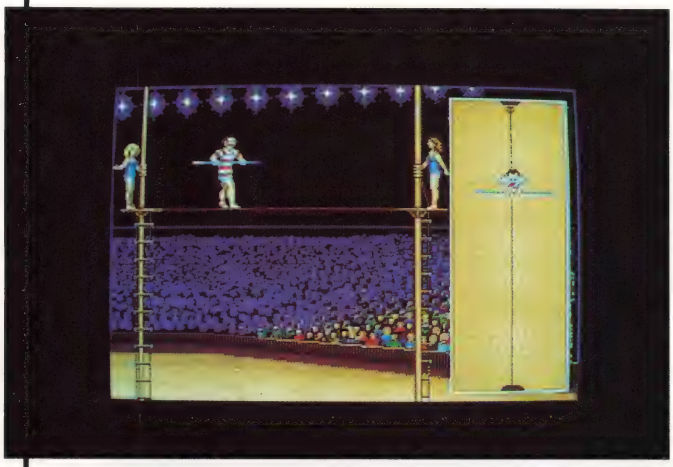
Chrono-quest, a new adventure from Psygnosis, is to be released at the beginning of September, priced £29.95. The quest begins when you find yourself as chief suspect to your father's murder. However, you have a suspicion that his servant did the dirty deed,

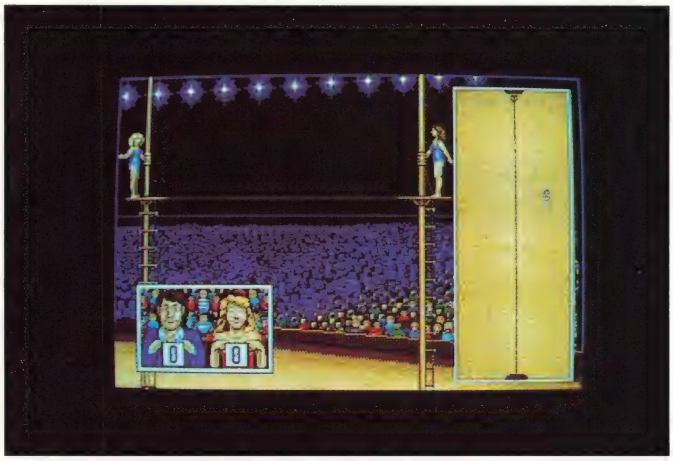


and escaped to the future using your father's secret invention, a time machine. The objective is to ultimately

Circus time at Tynesoft

Tynesoft are developing Circus Games. There are five events - tight rope walking, trapeze, lion taming, bare-back riding and International Competition. Under development in the U.S., the game will retail at £24.95, as will Superman. Expect Circus Games to be available in October and Superman in November.





travel into the future and sort things out. A four-disk game, it features full icon control and excellent graphics.

Zork Zero

Yes, not content with releasing the infamous Zork Trilogy, Infocom are developing Zork Zero (The revenge of Megaboz) for release sometime early in 1989. The game is being written by Steve Meretzky, author of Leather Goddess, covers a century of time and explores the collapse of the Great Underground Empire. The game is Infocom's largest ever, with over 200 locations. It also features the first graphical puzzles in an Infocom adventure.

The game takes you back to the last days of the empire; the Flathead family are already dead and it is your task to save the rest of the kingdom from the fated curse that Megaboz has cast.

Five go mad in Mediagenic

Hot on the heels of the Afterburner licence, Mediagenic have signed up the rights to FIVE of Sega's top new games: Galaxy Force, Altered Beast, Hot Rod, Sonic Boom and Ace Attacker. The titles will be divided between Activision and Electric Dreams.

Number five please, David!

Elite have acquired the rights to A Question of Sport. As in the TV quiz show, there will be 'The Picture Board', 'What Happened Next' and 'Home and Away', although whether you can get battered by Princess Anne's handbag is, as yet, undisclosed. The game's release is scheduled for the beginning of October. No price has been set at the moment.

Twins from Konix

Konix have just released two new joystick designs on the market to complement their unique Speedking range. The Predator is the chunky-handled one; the other being the Megablaster.

TV TIMES

Mediagenic have announced plans that they are to broadcast 36 adverts in November for Afterburner, SDI and R-Type. The ads will be 20 seconds long and go out on peak-time Saturday morning TV on TVS, LWT, Central and Granada. Afterburner will be released in December; R-Type in November and SDI in October.

PLAY HARD

The rights to the latest Bruce Willis blockbuster, Die Hard, have been snapped up by Mediagenic. The game will be released next year and will be based around the plot where Bruce plays a cop trying to free a group of hostages, including his wife, from twelve terrorists.

COMPILATION FOUR RED RAT

Red Rat have released Screaming Wings, Pengy, The Secret of Steel and Cosmos in a compilation disk by the name of Quartet Gold at a price of £19.99.

ELECTRIC DREAMS COME TRUE AT DONNINGTON

The winner of the Electric Dreams Super Hang-On competition, Chris Marron, had a fabulous day out at the British Motorcycle Grand Prix and met both Kevin Schwantz and Rob McElnea, the two Pepsi Team Suzuki riders. Chris is seen here with his elder brother and Rob McElnea. Just goes to show why absolutely EVERYONE should enter our competitions...

COLUSSUS CHESS X

CDS Software are on stand 3019 of the PC Show and it is there that they will launch their latest chess game, Colussus Chess X. Written by Martin Bryant, it has numerous levels of play, opening moves and various ways of displaying the board and pieces. Gary Quillan, the 1988 BBC Chess Champion will be playing demonstration games against the computer.

MENACING GAME

Psyclapse, a new label from Psygnosis, is developing a vertical scroller called Menace, featuring parallax scrolling and a host of other features. The mission? To destroy the planet of Draconia, of course.

DRILLER FEATURING FREESCAPE

Incentive Software are launching Driller, featuring Freescape, at the PC Show. The mission within the game is to 'locate and release the dangerous gases beneath the moon's surfaces, avoiding the outlawed race's defence system'. There are eighteen major sections, with additional sections within buildings and tunnels. Freescape has a '3D environmental simulator' - put simply, it's the 3D filled-vector graphics part of the game. Price for Driller will be £24.95.

RETURN OF THE JEDI

Following the deserved success of both "Star Wars" and "The Empire Strikes Back", Domark have announced that "Return of the Jedi" will be released in October. The game, if I remember correctly, was the only one of the series not to feature vector graphics, so it will be interesting to see if this conversion will be as good as the first two.

The game follows the film from where the rebels begin their attack on the Imperial Deathstar. You begin controlling Princess Leia on her speeder-bike, and must avoid the hostile Stormtroopers who are on your tail and

Trip-A-Tron

LIGHT SYNTHESISER

CONTROL PANEL

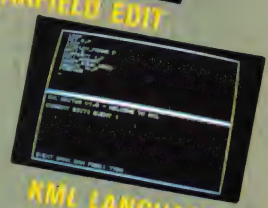
EVENT SEQUENCER

COLOUR COOKER

SILLYSCOPE

DISK ACCESS

STARFIELD EDIT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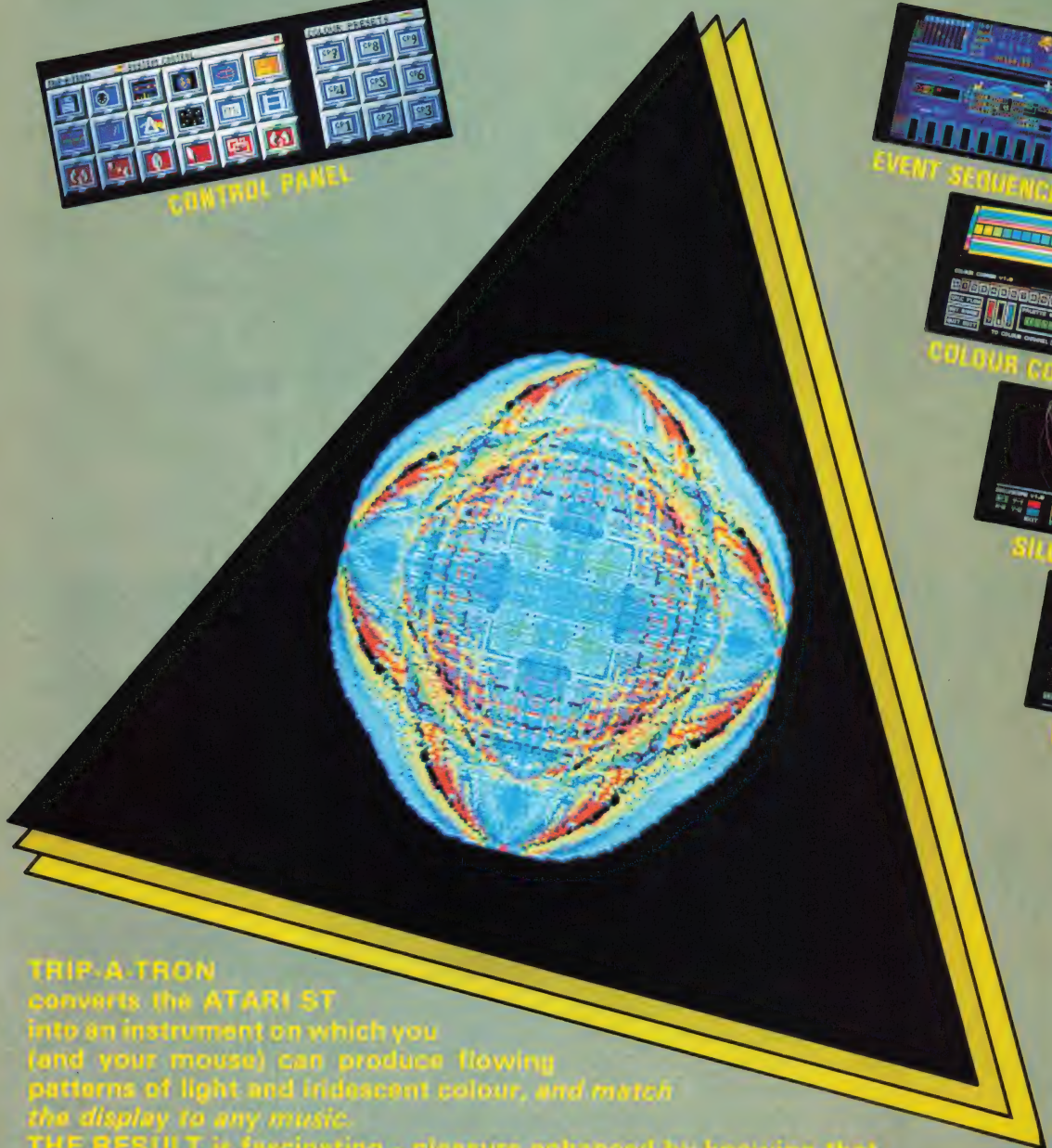

TRIP-A-TRON converts the ATARI ST into an instrument on which you (and your mouse) can produce flowing patterns of light and iridescent colour, *and match the display to any music.*
THE RESULT is fascinating - pleasure enhanced by knowing that your sequences can be saved and enjoyed again or *used as performance art at a disco or by a group.*
SOON THE LIGHT-SYNTHESIST COULD BE UP THERE WITH THE GUITAR HEROES.

TRIP-A-TRON runs on any version of the ST. It is in a form which is instantly useable. It has its own programming language, KML, and beautifully designed pop-up screens, helping you create an *infinity of unique effects.*
TRIP-A-TRON comes on two discs, with a comprehensive 146 page manual in an A5 ring binder.

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CAPCOM SET TO RELEASE TWO MEGA COIN-OP CONVERSIONS

Black Tiger and 1943 are soon to be released on the ST. 1943 is an all-action shoot-'em-up based on the Battle of the Midway. It is being developed by Probe Software and should be available by the time you read this. Look for the review in the next issue of ST Action. Black Tiger takes the form of you, a warrior, out to rid your homeland of three dragons. A four-way scrolling platform game, it features good graphics and will probably prove to be a hit with arcade and adventurer fans alike. Expect this one out on the streets around October.

SINBAD TRAVELS FORWARD IN TIME

Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon's release date has been moved forward from Christmas and is now available for the ST from Cinemaware. Priced £24.95, the game is similar in style to that of Defender of the Crown, but with improved graphics and more of an 'adventure' feel to it. Look out for a full review in next months issue.

any trees that get in your way. Your aim being a safe arrival in the Ewok village.

Once Leia is safe in the Ewok village, control is switched to Chewbacca the Wookie, who must take his Scout Walker to a bunker. You must avoid logs and rocks, and shoot anything that tries to hinder your progress. The Han Solo will de-activate the Death Star's shields, leaving it open to attack from Lando Clarrision who must fight the TIE fighters, leaving Han to fly deep into the Death Star and shoot its core, escaping just before it explodes.

The game is also said to use a unique "split screen" feature in which, during levels two and three, you can control one of two ships at any time, with the action swapping over at key points.

SPITTING IMAGE

Hailed as one of the most popular and original TV programmes, Spitting Image will soon be making its debut on the ST. You are presented with six challengers who want to take over the world. These are Gorbachev, the Pope, the Ayatollah, President Botha, Margaret Thatcher and Ronald McDonald (better known as the current President of the United States). A great war is due to take place and it's your task to ensure that whoever wins this war is stopped. Hilarious fights take place all over the world as you combat each of the nasty leaders and (hopefully) destroy their credibility.

Look out for, amoungst others, the Pope's unfair use of a fire extinguisher and Botha's interesting toilet habits against the opposition. A huge and beautifully executed piece of programming, full of V signs, bums, naughty words and six people's bid to rule the world. Only your ability to undermine their authority can stop them. "We wanted to make the game as much fun as the show itself....and are working very closely with Spitting Image's own script writers" says Domark's Joint Managing Director, Dominic Wheatley. The game will be available in the last quarter of 1988.

LIVE AND LET DIE

Domark, who pioneered the computer Bond sensations, promises that Live and Let Die will be the greatest 007 success yet, and that this package will emulate the thrill, spectacle and excitement of the original classic film.

Dr. Kanaga ("Mr. Big") shrewdly conceals all his dealings from prying eyes by basing his headquarters on San Monique, a paradise island controlled by the people's fear of voodoo. On this island, huge fields contain poppies with which Dr. Kanaga plans to control the US drug market by flooding America with tons of free heroin. This, incidentally, will also provi de money for arms countries allied to San Monique.

As James Bond, you must carry out the orders of "M" and destroy these heroin factories, each of which need a large supply of water to keep manufacturing. "Q" has provided you with a hi-tech speedboat, missiles and fuel (courtesy of the CIA), and also arranged a training session on an MOD-owned river. But be warned: Dr. Kanaga is no fool and each waterway is heavily protected and he will stop at nothing to sink you without trace. Your ultimate goal is to stop the looming human and political disaster by destroying those evil heroin factories.

R.N.L.I. WATCH OUT!

Hot on the heals of their last game, Fire and Forget, Titus Software are now due to release Offshore Warrior. Set in the year 2050, Offshore Warrior puts you in the driving seat of a super-fast speedboat. You must compete in a tournament to the death, a new leathal sport where anything goes. Offshore Warrior's launch is imminent at a price of £19.95.

HYPERFORCE, HYPERHYPE

A hastily-scribbled note hit my desk the other day with these screen shots of a new game by Prism Leisure. In the accompanying note it claimed that the game was 'a totally wicked challenge with seriously bad twists and puzzles'! Oh! Well, I suppose it can't be helped. Anyway, the game will be demo-ed at the PC Show so catch it there or look out for a full review soon.

THE TOP TEN SCORING GAMES REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE OF ST ACTION

1	NEBULUS	(HEWSON)	92%
2	SUPER HANG-ON	(ELECTRIC DREAMS)	84%
3	HELTER SKELTER	(AUDIOGENIC)	82%
4	ELIMINATOR	(HEWSON)	80%
5	STARGLIDER II	(RAINBIRD)	77%
6=	EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	(DOMARK)	75%
6=	SPACE HARRIER	(ELITE)	75%
8	SUMMER OLYMPIAD	(TYNESOFT)	72%
9	OVERLANDER	(ELITE)	69%
10	NETHERWORLD	(HEWSON)	65%

WHAT'S IN THE NEXT STUNNING ISSUE OF ST ACTION?

The best just keeps on getting better. This month we bring you an amazing nine pages of news, 30 pages of games reviews, the top tips on Dungeon Master, and 100 pages of everything exciting in the ST games universe. And next month we've got even more planned. So, on the 13th of October you'd better rush down to your local (newsagents that is) and purchase a copy of issue 7 of *ST Action*.

Next month's line up includes:

Reviews: Elite, Star Goose, Sinbad, Skychase, Sargon III chess, Where Time Stood Still, I Ludicrus.

Features: Bags of hot news,
An interview with the Bit-Map Brothers

Megatest: Platform games including: Bubble Bobble, Bomb Jack, Elevator Action, Frost Bite, Impossible Mission II .

Hints and tips:

More invaluable game-play tips, with a selection of unbeatable pokes from Mark Lawrence.

.....and much too much more to list!

Note: We cannot guarantee that all of the items listed above will appear in next month's issue, but we'll do our best.

STA

The Letters Desk, ST Action, 10 Theatre Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1SR

Wanted - one T-shirt

I own an ST and have bought all issues of your magazine. I especially like the reviews, news and tips - good work lads, keep it up!

I was reading issue 4 about Activision's new games, when an 'AfterBurner' T-shirt caught my eye. Could you possibly tell me where I can get one of these T-shirts and how much it would cost? I would be grateful if you could let me have the information.

David Holmes
Shrewsbury

Well, David, I'm afraid that the T-shirt you spotted was worn by none other then Mediagenic PR manager Amanda Barry, and the T-shirt in question is as rare as crocodile tears - I should know, I've been trying to get one for ages! The T-shirt, like a lot of promotional clothing, is made in restricted numbers and is not for general sale. The only possible suggestion I can make is that when Activision release After Burner, they do a competition in ST Action with one of the prizes being the infamous T-shirt!

Planning time

I have seen a number of letters in various magazines complaining about Carrier Command by Rainbird. Yes, the time spent travelling between islands can be a drag; however, there are plenty of ways to make it less annoying.

Firstly, as soon as you leave one island, prepare your Mantas and AAVs for the next attack. Arm them, and set their autopilots in advance, to save time. Check on your stores, and the current repair status of the Epsilon, the AAVs and the Mantas. Perform any necessary repairs. Check the island network, and consider your next few moves.

I usually find that by the time I have done all of the above, the next island is already in sight. The carrier is at its slowest in shallow water; if you plan your route carefully, and attack from a distance using your Mantas and AAVs, then you can avoid the shallow water and greatly speed up your transit time between islands. Also, don't forget to take in all of your defence drones, since they slow down the carrier as well.

Initially, islands are easy to take. However, if you persevere you will find that the enemy carrier becomes more clever, and places its ACCBs in the centres of the islands or behind active volcanoes. In my game which I am currently playing, I have just over half of the islands under my control, and have begun to encounter enemy defences with centrally-located ACCBs, shielded with volcanoes. These are extremely difficult to destroy, believe me, and the game is anything but boring - so my advice to C Lloyd is to persevere with the game for a little longer.

I suspect many of the people who find Carrier Command 'boring' would also find Chess or other strategic games similarly dull. It is perhaps unfortunate that Carrier Command looked rather like a high-speed, all-action arcade game.

Shane Murphy
Hyde Heath

As the original reviewer for Carrier Command, I feel the same way as yourself about keeping one or two steps ahead of the opposition. As I was taught in the R.A.F., always make best use of your resources and time available to you, thereby saving time and effort later on when things start to heat up. As you've said, the time is there for you to make use of - if they replaced the travelling time with a simple touch of the space-bar, then when you arrived at the next island, you would literally have to pause the game in order to sort yourself out. After all, Montgomery did not plan the battle of El Alamein in one or two minutes; he made sure that all his troops, vehicles and equipment were ready for such an assault before it started. He also spent a long time planning his method of attack. I'll stick with my original views.

TOS irregularities

I understand that some software written for the ST will not run on the newer STs. Therefore, please could you print a list of those that will not, as it is quite annoying to have to return it to the shop in order to change the game for one that will work.

R G A Withers
Southend-on-Sea

You do not say what games have caused you problems. At a guess, however, I would have thought it to be the older games that have possibly been sitting on the shop shelf for quite some time as, at the moment, we are not having trouble with TOS irregularities on the games that we are currently receiving for review. However, if any readers have had trouble with certain games in the recent past, then please write in and we can let other readers know. In general, though, software manufacturers have cleared up this problem and go to great lengths to ensure compatability, as there is nothing that infuriates consumers more than a game from their company that refuses to load because of something that can be corrected quite simply.

Bald Run

Why does the 'gorgeous' blonde in Out Run have a bald patch? Also, why is she so ugly (as shown when you crash)?

Yours less than seriously
C J Whiteman
Wareham

I don't know. Why does the woman have a bald patch? Answers (not too rude!) on a postcard addressed to Martin Moth at the usual ST Action address and I'll print the best answer and he or she will get a prize of a U.S. Gold game of their choice.

Another mag?

I have bought your magazine since issue 1 and feel it is well worth what I pay for. However, I feel the magazine could be made just that bit more enjoyable by:

1) A section which reviews books that help you to program on the ST. I think that the ST as purely a games playing machine is abusing the ST's potential as a computer.
2) A section which covers utilities and hardware currently available for the ST, e.g., printers, modems, hard disks, etc., as I am looking forward to buying a modem next year.

I would be grateful if you could put some of these requests into action. On another matter, I would like to know why mail order companies sell games that are available in the shops, priced £24, at only £16 or so? That's a staggering £8 or 66% less. Please keep up the good work and good luck to the ST Action team.
H Gill

The above points that you have mentioned are fine, but if we included them we would be in danger of incurring the wrath of our sister magazine, ST World, that deals perfectly well with all aspects of the non-entertainment side of the ST. One of the reasons for splitting ST World into two mags was because of the vast increase in the number of games becoming available for the ST. All the points you mention are covered each month in ST World so, the next time you are in your newsagents, check it out - it might be what you're looking for.

As for the price difference between mail order and High Street shops, there are quite a few reasons. First, the shop has to pay quite heavy day-to-day costs of a number of staff, the rent and running costs of the shop and its associated lighting, heating and other bills. Also, the turnover is not nearly so great as in a mail order company, so the profits have to be higher to cope with less turnover. The mail order company, on the other hand, normally runs on a minimum of staff, there are no heavy bills for the place where they work, and the turnover is very high indeed. All these factors, and more besides, influence the price difference between the two places.

Points one to five

I'd just like to make a few points.
1) I think the mag's great. Keep up the good work.
2) Do you think Grand Slam will ever release Pac Land? I've been waiting for 6 months so far. Last time I called, they said 'September'.
3) I would like to congratulate Mirrorsoft/FTL on the most brilliant game ever - Dungeon Master.
4) Why is Bionic Commandos so hard? It is much harder than the arcade game and virtually impossible to play.
5) I would like to point out that Spectrum and Commodore disk games are £14.95, so ST games are not all that much more expensive.
Chris Marron
Isleworth

Right, down to business. Thank you for point one. Grandslam WILL be releasing Pacland around September, probably to coincide with the PC Show. I've passed point three on to Mirrorsoft. The guys in the office who have played Bionic Commandos did not think it was too hard; if it was too easy then people would slate it. It's always difficult to get the right playability in a game. As for point five, don't you think those prices are a shade expensive for an 8-bit game?

That's life

Some ST fanatics down here in 'sunny' Plymouth are trying to organize an ST disk fanzine, which is (probably) to be called 'eSTer'.

Thing is, we need other ST addicts and enthusiasts to write reviews, articles and programs, so if anyone out there is interested in getting their views across to others, contact:

Andrew Jewell
20 Rawlin Close
Eggbuckland
Plymouth, PL6 5TF

Great idea. Hope someone can come up with a better name though!

World in Action

The idea of a highscore table is ridiculous as there is, normally, no way of verifying the scores (by the way, all my unbeatable scores of 100,000,000, 000,000,000,000,000 have been verified by my friend, who'll also lie to get his name printed in your mag).

Mr Allen (for it is you, Sir) also suggests that you print a course to teach people how to write games in ST Basic! I rest my case. Either he knows absolutely nothing about his glorified arcade machine or he is the world's greatest optimist. If he really wants to learn how to use assembler to write games, or any decent language to learn how to program, I suggest that he start reading ST World which has to be the best read for the more serious-minded ST owner.

Finally, I must congratulate you on your ability to provide the best in ST monthly literature for both ends of the market. Your solution seems to have hit the mark perfectly. As someone who uses his machine for word processing and programming and likes the odd game when I get home from the pub, the combination of ST World and ST Action is unbeatable. Keep up the good work in both areas and you have a reader for life (or at least until I can afford a Cray II of my own).

Frank Hollis
Harlow

Amiga tips

Another Amiga owner has put pen to paper to come up with suggestions that could improve your mag. First off, how about a special adventure section complete with tips. Also I think you should definitely have a high-score table and top 10 games chart - all of the good mags in the past had them. Finally, how about Sci-Fi/Fantasy book reviews. As far as my knowledge goes, the two (computing & Sci-Fi books) go hand-in-hand.

P.S. Keep up the good work.

P.P.S. The Amiga and ST aren't that different.

Julian (86) Loveday
Hornchurch

First off, no. We deliberately integrated the adventure games with the rest of the entertainment software reviews as the 'classes' of games are becoming more blurred and we wanted to help break down the barrier between the adventurer and the arcade addict. On your second point, we think that we will NOT be including a high-score table or a top 10 games chart. Just because other mags had them in the past doesn't mean to say that we have to follow suit. Finally, we are a magazine dedicated to bringing reviews and news of all new games releases to the reader and we just don't have space to cover other subjects such as science fiction book reviews.

Money for nothing

After 43 hours and 10 minutes of play, I finished Carrier Command... was it worth it? Not in a million years. How can software houses expect us to fork out money for a game without a reason for completing the game? Surely they could offer prizes for the first person to complete a game. Some software houses do do this but not many. Another example of wasted time was on the brilliant game, Sentinel. After a very long time I managed to get through the 10,000 lands. What for? Nothing. I only played the game because I thought there would have been an ending... There was none.

If rewards were available I would reckon that software sales would rise tenfold.

Anthony Parker
St. Brelades

Taking sides

As the new STs are being made with double-sided disk drives, could you please tell me how long it will be before ST owners such as myself will be able to obtain single-sided disks before they are phased out, and we have to have double-sided disk drives fitted?

I Pocock
Middlesborough

Double-sided drives will read single-sided disks. A blank double-sided disk can be re-formatted as single-sided. Most single-sided disks can be re-formatted as double-sided, but don't use these for valuable information as single-sided disks are really double-sided disks that, for one reason or another, have failed quality control as a DD/DS disk, but are perfectly good enough for DD/SS use. Single-sided disks will not be phased out - there are more machines than simply the ST that use 3.5" disks! You will in all likelihood not have to replace your drive with the double-sided variety. STA

Letters Desk is edited by Martin Moth.

ACTION SERVICE

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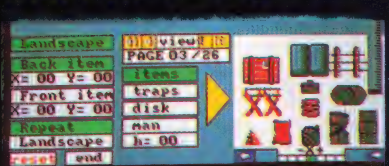

The Construction Set control panel

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Screen shots from Atari ST version

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ATARI ST screen shots shown.

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MIRROR Soft

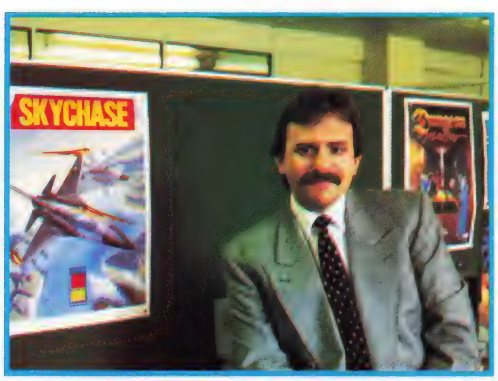
Mirrorsoft have not really figured prominently as a household name in the entertainment software industry apart from the odd mega-hit, such as Dungeon Master. Visiting their premises just off Fleet Street, Martin Moth finds that all this is about to change with the advent of a new games label.

Peter Bilotta - mini profile

I was introduced to Peter Bilotta, Managing Director of Mirrorsoft, and started by asking how Imageworks, Mirrorsoft's new home-grown label, first came about.

'I arrived at Mirrorsoft, having spent four years with another leisure software publisher which had an extremely high profile both domestically and internationally. My perception of Mirrorsoft, from the standpoint of having worked with a competitor, was that I knew Mirrorsoft existed but didn't regard it as competition. When I had the opportunity to join Mirrorsoft, I did so on the terms that I wasn't going to be happy being a 'B' or 'C'-type publisher, I wanted Mirrorsoft to be brand leaders, not followers.'

'Looking at the range of products we had then, I think Jim Mackonochie, our Chairman, had the foresight to have a commitment to the 16-bit industry, whilst a large number of the UK software houses were so far behind, or did not believe in the 16-bit machines - some still don't. Mirrorsoft's other major advantage was the quality of their developmental work. However, as some of this had still to reach the market place, no-one in the software industry was aware of the wealth of strong products that Mirrorsoft had acquired. The reverse side of the coin was that the profile, style and overall image of Mirrorsoft were very poor, and that most of the high-profile products were from American affiliates. One of the things said about us at the time was that we were a sleeping giant, and so my first task was to awaken it because Mirrorsoft did command a great deal of loyalty and commitment and I wanted to repay that as quickly as possible. Imageworks is part of that awakening. The new label is vibrant and contemporary and utilises the great wealth of talent that Mirrorsoft already possessed. I also wanted to build for the future and so, to further strengthen the new label, I sought out new talent and creativity and for this we looked to the UK and Europe - you don't need to go to America all the time, there is a great deal of talent in the European territories and we've been searching it out and have acquired some already. It's an ongoing process and we are signing up new talent all the time and, for the foreseeable future, we will be actively looking for more development teams and one-offs that need management and assistance. Our new policy is already paying off, as you can see from the Imageworks entertainment software under development, there is only one American product, Skychase, that is from a young American development house, all the rest are European.'



'Tony Crowther has a number of products with Imageworks. He's been doing "Fernandez must die" (for the ST), and "Bamboozal" for the 8-bits. Already a well-known figure in the industry, we believe that these programs are his best yet. Another acquisition has been the Bitmap Brothers - just tremendous. They've got so much talent it's unbelievable. When they came to me, they were ready to sign with another major publisher. I sat them down, outlined our plans and their potential future with us and they decided to change course at literally the eleventh hour. What I think really counts is that we spend a lot of management time with these people - they are our lifeblood. If they produce innovative and quality programs we all succeed, we are all rewarded and Mirrorsoft are happy to reinvest the profits we make in yet more new talent and therefore the end-user benefits.'

PETER BILOTTA, MANAGING DIRECTOR

'So we work extremely hard with the programmers. Another guy working for us is Adrian Stevens, developing Mainframe, who works on his own. He's got so much genius that he works best alone, so we spend most of our time talking with him and putting the games design around Mainframe. So each has their own preferred way of working and we cater to their needs. The Bitmap Brothers

enjoy a high profile - fine, we'll give them a high profile. Adrian Stevens likes his peace and quiet - again, we'll leave him to himself and the talent will flow.'

'One of the best things about the new label is the excitement and energy that everyone concerned with the label is feeling. Imageworks isn't out yet but they're still enjoying it. We are confident that it's going to be a market leader. We are bringing new ideas into this industry in an effort to make it grow. As a software industry it is comparatively small, but if you look at the worldwide market and add on entertainment as a whole, you are starting to look at something substantial and what we want to do is build something substantial. As you know, we are heavily into researching CD-ROM, CDI and DVI. This is also important to a lot of the people that come under our wing, such as, the Bitmap Brothers, Cinemaware and FTL, because our partners will have an insight into that at the right time and go on to produce something better still. It all boils down to building for the future. So far, we've had very positive feedback on Imageworks, its profile, its style and programs. Once again, we come back to the well-worn, but often forgotten fact that it is the strength of the product that counts.'

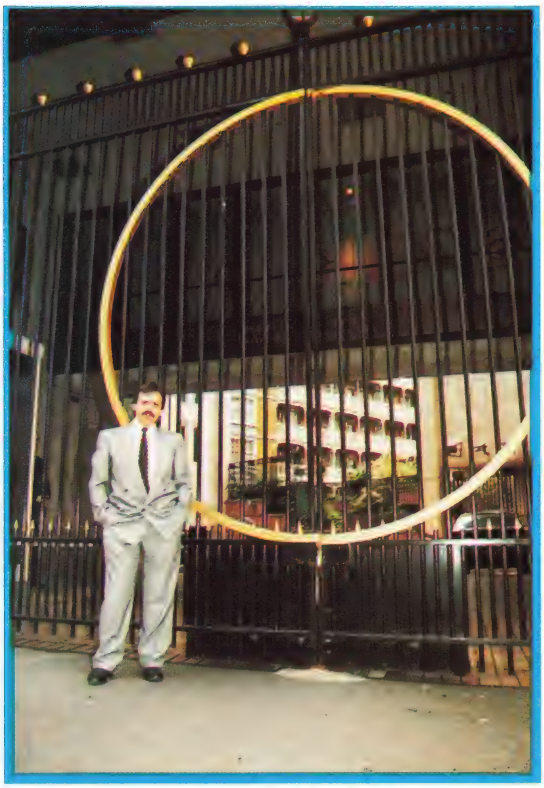
I commented that the timing for the announcement of the new label and the release dates for the new Imageworks games ties in well with the PC Show and the rise in sales towards Christmas.

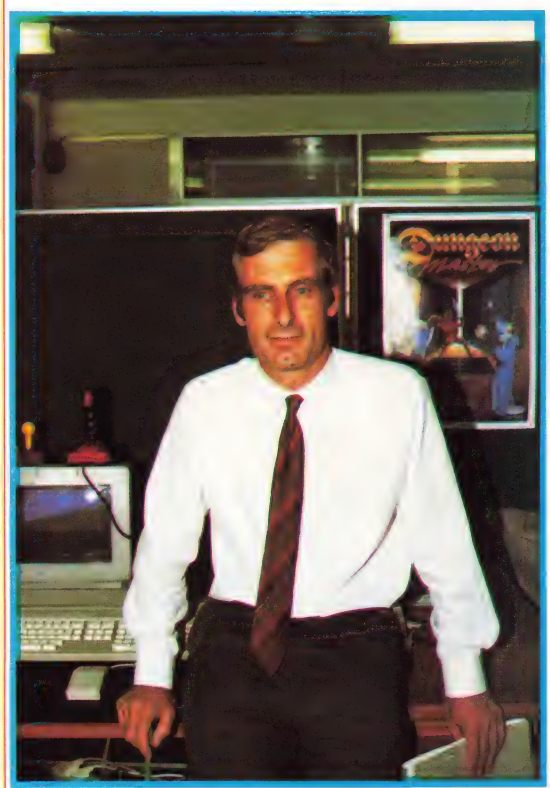
'We spent a lot of money in the quiet season; we're investing for the time ahead of us - speculate to accumulate. The first product will come out at the end of August; the label will be fairly established in the consumer's eye at the PC Show and we'll be ready for the Christmas market. Basically, I've sat here for seven months now and have been getting the structure, the people and marketing right. Now we've got something to shout about, and after that we'll keep quiet for another six months and there's a lot more in development that will break new boundaries and surpass even our current schedule of releases.'

'The main feature of the 16-bit market has to be attention to detail. The users are becoming much more discerning these days, and it's good as it forces us to keep on our toes which, in turn, makes us keep the developers on their toes, pushing the limits of the machine as well as creating a first-class game. All this, as you can well imagine, means investment. Investment of time, trouble and money. Imageworks as a design concept took us a long time to agree to. We spent a lot of external research on that to see whether or not it was right. Even the name took a long time to decide. That kind of detail is important to the long-term plans of the company. So far, the response has been very enthusiastic.'

'Behind all this, though, Mirrorsoft as an umbrella company is always there. It all rolls into Mirrorsoft. The products don't have to be known to the kids as Mirrorsoft, in fact in some situations it would prove confusing, but to the trade, Mirrorsoft stands for the solid foundation on which Imageworks stands. We're proud of all our affiliates and we work extremely hard for all of them, but Imageworks is special to us.'

'Another facet to Mirrorsoft is its business division, which is something most leisure software publishers do not have. Both markets need a very different approach to get the best out of them. Like the entertainment side, the business division established itself with low-end DTP packages and has a very good reputation for that. It is also expanding itself into what I term 'niche mass-market' products at the low-end, which are just hitting the market place. It takes six months to establish a product in the business market, whereas in the entertainment sector, especially the 8-bit market, a product can dive after the first day. So there is a very different approach needed to cope with the two very different markets and, correspondingly, the company is split to work with either the business or the entertainment side of things. However, with me having to oversee the whole company, I occasionally have to split myself in two, which sometimes proves difficult.'





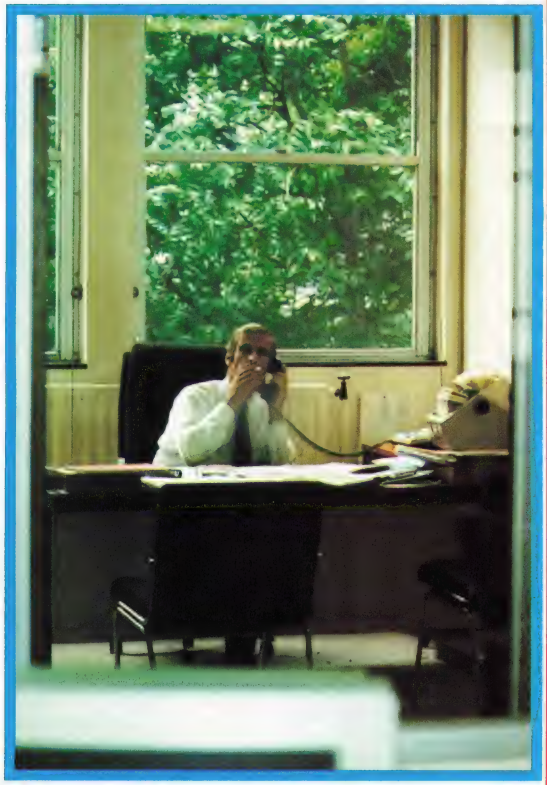
JIM McGONAGHIE, CHAIRMAN.

Jim McGonaghie mini profile

Jim is the chairman of Pergamon Compact Solutions, which provides a CD-ROM service for publishers but also publishes their own CD-ROM products. He is also chairman of Mirrorsoft, which

is the entertainment and business publishing division for Europe, and Spectrum Holobyte, the sister company in the US. I quizzed him about CD. Although very reticent about giving too much away, he did have this to say about the CD scene at the moment:

'We have licensed a data retrieval system, called KRS, that runs under PC-DOS. In about two month's time, we will



be releasing a version of KRS that runs under Hypercard on the Macintosh. There is also a version of KRS that runs on the ST. In fact, KRS was first done on the ST about three years ago. We are currently evaluating the porting over of the latest version of KRS from the PC to the ST and hope to make an announcement in the next few months to the effect that it's working and we can market it.'

'The market is about a year-and-a-half old. The first applications that people have used have been what one would call 'high-value, added-information' products which, cutting out the jargon, means extremely expensive encyclopaedias that cost, in printed form, around £2000. These are usually very large databases of financial, scientific, medical and technical information.'

'Another market is in the area of microfilm replacement. The aircraft servicing manual is a good example. This is a CD-ROM of the Boeing 757 manual, which we have just completed. A maintenance manual is typically 20,000 pages thick, including both the engineering drawings and the text. As you can imagine, scanning through 20,000 pages on microfilm is an horrendous task. However, we can fit all of that onto a CD-ROM and, because we can access any word in that whole volume of data, we can, for instance, look up 'oil leak in low pressure turbine' by simply entering that at the terminal and, almost immediately, the relevant information will be at your fingertips.'

'The trouble is that a CD-ROM drive costs around £700. The prices are beginning to drop towards normal audio CD players. Hopefully some innovative hardware manufacturer will slot in a CD-drive into his PC/ST/whatever as another drive, and then we've got mass-market potential, but that is probably several years away.'

I tried to pin him down as to what was going on in the entertainment world with regards to CD-ROM. Suddenly I found Jim being extra-evasive.

'We are looking at two projects at the moment...'

I personally think that one area where the CD-ROM would really come into its own is in flight simulation, as an arcade game is not going to be that much more spectacular whether it's on CD or a normal disk. Knowing Jim is an avid flight-sim man himself, I put this to him in an effort to draw more information. It was like trying to draw blood from a stone. However, Jim agreed.

'Yes, what we're looking for in entertainment applications is something that is going to need vast amounts of data and, in the example you've given, flight simulations need vast amounts of data in ground terrain/relief maps. So one could imagine filling up a CD with a very detailed world. The second area that is worth exploring is the capability of certain new CD-ROM drives that can also play CD audio. So there is the possibility of playing the game on, say, your ST, and connecting up speakers to the CD audio channel to enable you to get a few hundred mega-

TOM WATSON, MARKETING MANAGER.

byte's-worth of pure digital audio sound effects and music to play to. The key factor, though, is to get the price of CD drives low enough to generate mass interest which will then attract software developers.'

I then left the subject of CDs and turned towards the history of the company.

'It started off in an extremely small way. I had spent most of my career in the newspaper industry with the Mirror Group as Production Manager of the Sunday People and Deputy Production Manager of the Group. I was then responsible for development of new technology in the newspapers which, in those days, was introducing typesetting systems and office automation. About four years ago, when the Spectrum was released and the C64 and BBC were around, I proposed to the Mirror board that we should do a little experiment in publishing computer software using resources within the department. It was more an exercise in PR, along the same lines as the Mirror dinghy

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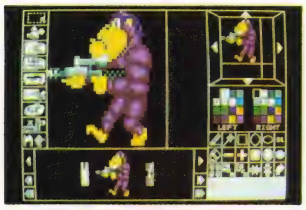

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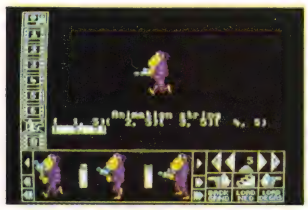
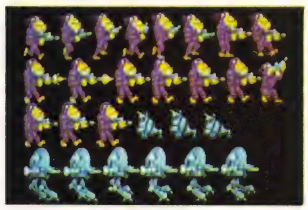
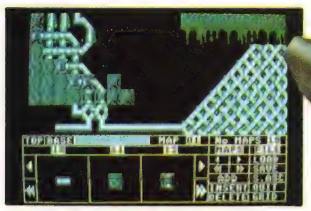


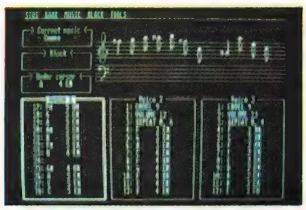
Set the sprites in motion with the animator section



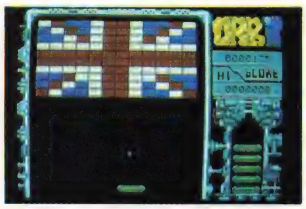
Choose from a range of example sprites included with STOS



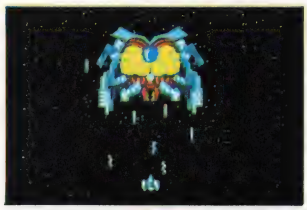
Produce a layout for each screen with the room designer



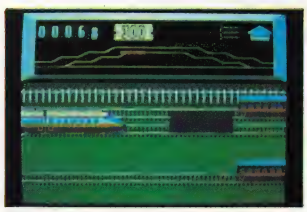
Create dynamic sound effects and compose a suitable score



Construct devious screens in the feature-packed Orbit game



Draw the flight paths of the attacking aliens in Zoltar



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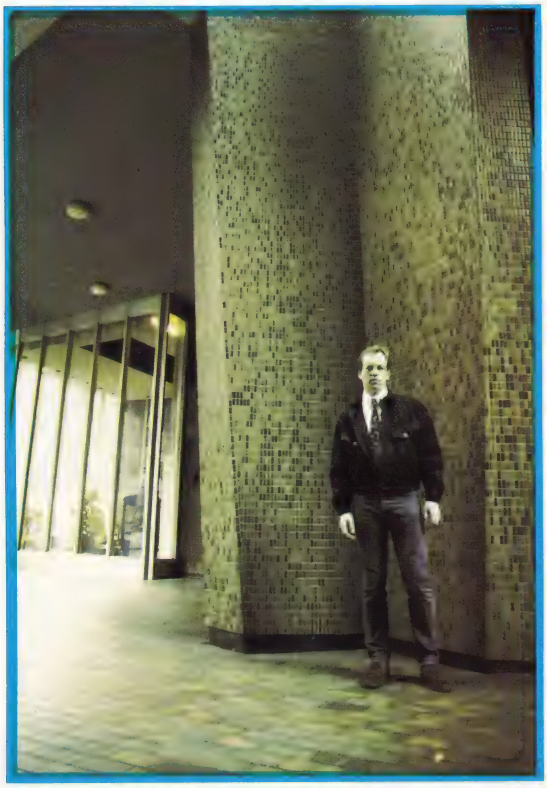
and Mirror books, such as Andy Capp. We decided to call it Mirrorsoft and put out three products and, as such, it was a service to the readers of our newspapers. Of course, when Robert Maxwell took over the Mirror Group, he evaluated what was going on within the Group and decided that he wanted to build up the software publishing side and changed it from an experiment to a business, so I moved across and carried on building up the company, which has now become a group of companies.'

Tom Watson - mini profile

Tom, the marketing manager, is a larger-than-life character that one almost instantly takes a liking to. I have met him several times previously and so was just about to sit down with the tape recorder for the interview when he came out with:

'I never said that!', talking more for the



benefit of my tape recorder than to me personally.

'That's okay', I said, lying through my teeth,'if there's something that you've said that you don't want in the magazine, then I won't print it'.

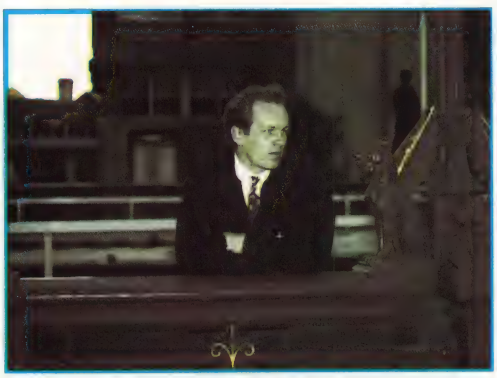
Obviously reassured by my honest face, he sat down and we commenced to chat about his work at the moment.

'All my efforts at the moment are channelled towards Imageworks. In terms of time, a great percentage is spent getting the brand into the market place. This is very, very difficult indeed. One thing about the market is that it is growing in terms of active software purchases, but it's not growing that much. Therefore, if you are going to launch a new brand and consequently want to achieve a certain level of market share (our requirements for market share are not necessarily those of Ocean, Gremlin or Mastertronic, all of whom have different requirements) then you are not looking at where you can fit into an expanding market, but you are looking at a virtually static market and you are trying to find the 'bit' of other peoples' sales that you can pinch.'

'With regards to software sales, research carried out makes very interesting reading. They indicate that, of all home computer owners, only 13% are regular software purchasers, that means purchasing ten or more pieces of software a year. There's roughly 50% who don't purchase entertainment products at all.'

'A lot of these are people who have stopped using their computer, the typical "Spectrum in the attic" syndrome. A lot are people who bought BBCs and are now trying hard to work out why they bought a BBC. The rest are people who bought PCs. One of the things about the MS-DOS environment is that purchasers normally have to go to a specialist shop to buy one of the machines. These people will just not see entertainment software. Even if they do, it's still very much the (whispered) "Can I have a game, please, and don't forget to put it in a brown paper bag". So they take their machine home and then find out by word of mouth how and where to get software. So another problem is getting through to the consumer in that respect.'

One of the key sayings that I heard over and over again, was, 'we're building for the future'. The company has given birth to Imageworks, and they are backing up the label with a lot of quality software. They have managed to acquire some of the best programming talent in the country and I'm sure they will not waste their resources. I predict (and I stand to be proved wrong) that Imageworks' games will figure quite heavily in ST entertainment software collections by the middle of 1989. STA



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"John Philips has already impressed us once this month with his fast-moving Eliminator. With Nebulus he opts for a more sedate pace - will it be half as much fun?"

As Pogo makes his way to the top of the tower, he must continually solve puzzles while avoiding the meanies.

NEBULUS

HEWSON (£19.95)

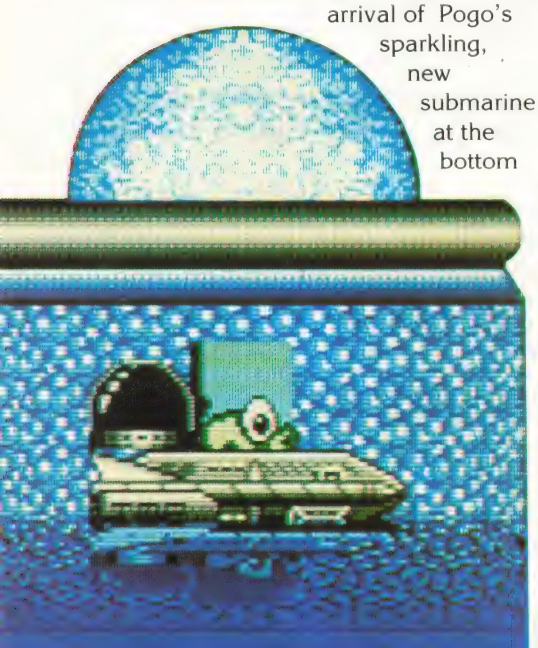
I have been using an ST for just over three years now and I have to say that Nebulus is the best game I have ever seen running on this machine. The game has stunning state-of-the-art graphics, so good in fact that they wouldn't be out of place on an arcade machine. Likewise, the sound is of the highest standard, sampled effects and music give the game an arcade-quality atmosphere. But what really makes Nebulus stand out from the crowd is the game-play. Never has a game captiviated me for so long and so hard (with the possible exception of Boulderdash on the C64). The puzzles are great to solve and yet the game still retains and arcade action feel. This is the best and I doubt you'll see better for a long time. Also, I wouldn't be surprised to see the game reaching the arcades before too long.

HRG

Nebulus was originally released on the Commodore 64 and Sinclair Spectrum in November 1987 with an Amstrad version following, and was an instant classic with its excellent graphics and unique "Rotational scrolling" system. The game's success was, in my opinion, probably due to this latter innovation, as it added a new dimension to the age-old platform genre, yet it also managed to maintain playability.

The game is set - surprise, suprise - on the planet Nebulus where, suddenly, and without prior planning permission, someone has erected huge towers in the sea. Naturally, the governing authorities aren't too happy about this and want them taken down as soon as possible. So, after a quick phone call, "Destructo Inc." are commissioned the job. Your character, a green, pop-eyed reptilian called Pogo, is awakened by the ringing of the office phone, and on answering it hears his boss telling him of a "nice little earner" he has for him. Being half asleep and an impetuous fool, Pogo whizzes out of the office with the promises, "pay rise" and "a brand new Mk. 7 mini-sub", ringing in his ears, yet fails to hear his boss mention that it will be extremely dangerous because the towers are inhabited by assorted aliens, and that only an idiot would do it...

After pressing fire to begin the game, a brief twang intro from what sounds like an Indian Sitar heralds the arrival of Pogo's sparkling, new submarine at the bottom of the screen. Its hatch opens and our gun-toting hero is deposited on the bottom step of the water-surrounded tower, then it disappears again. It is here that you notice the attention to detail on the graphics: the water around the base of the tower glistens and shimmers, and the city in the background also has a slow, drifting reflection. You also notice your rapidly decreasing, four-hundred-second time-limit! On first moving Pogo, you also realise why the clever scrolling technique was praised so much. What it looks like and how it works is difficult to put into words, but basically, Pogo remains stationary whilst the tower revolves around him. The effect of movement is very impressive, and matched with Pogo's cute animation and the smooth verti-

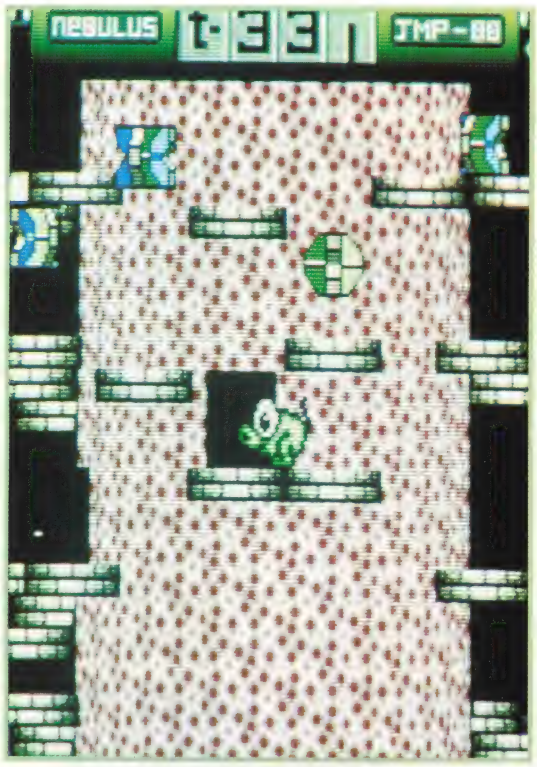


I was a great fan of Nebulus in its 8-bit form, so I was more than happy to give this the "once over". Instead of just transferring it over lock, stock and barrel, the programmers have taken care to ensure that the game makes the most of the ST's better qualities. The graphics are the finest I have ever seen in a computer game, with little touches like the shimmering water and the fact that you can see the sky through an open door as the tower turns, swinging my vote. Sound, too, is excellent, with a catchy tune on the title screen, and very nice spot effects during the game. This is a brilliant game and by far the best I've seen in a long, long while.

SM

cal scrolling, works perfectly.

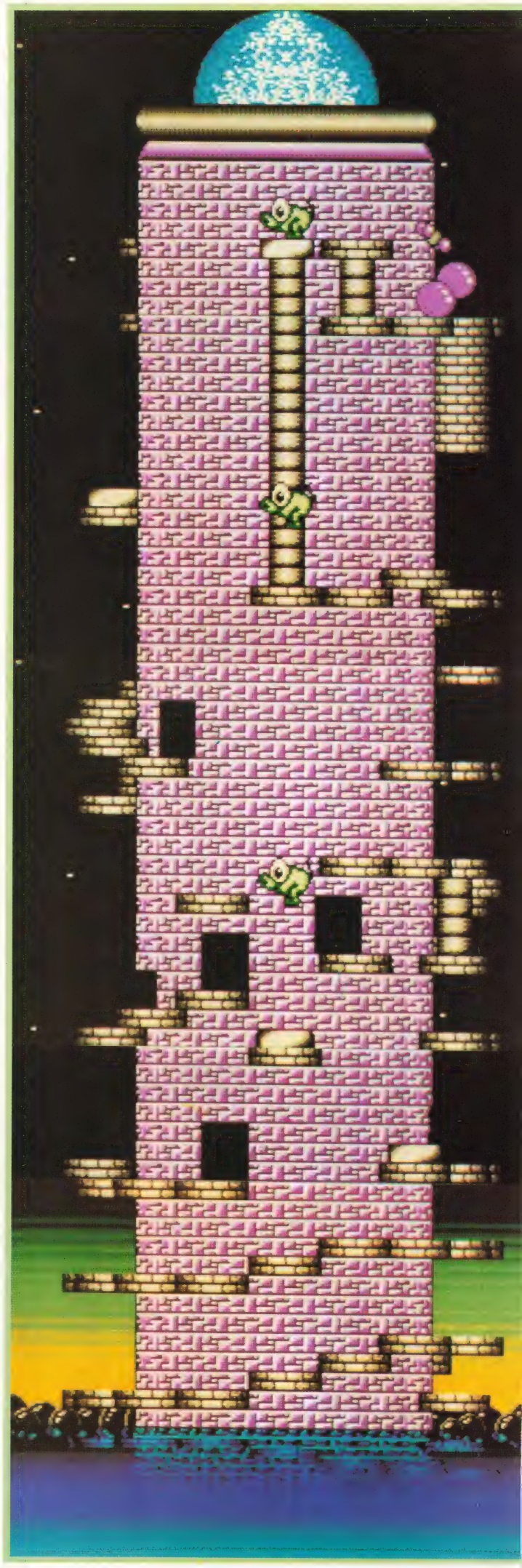
To be able to set the explosives to destroy each of the sixteen towers, Pogo must reach the very top within each



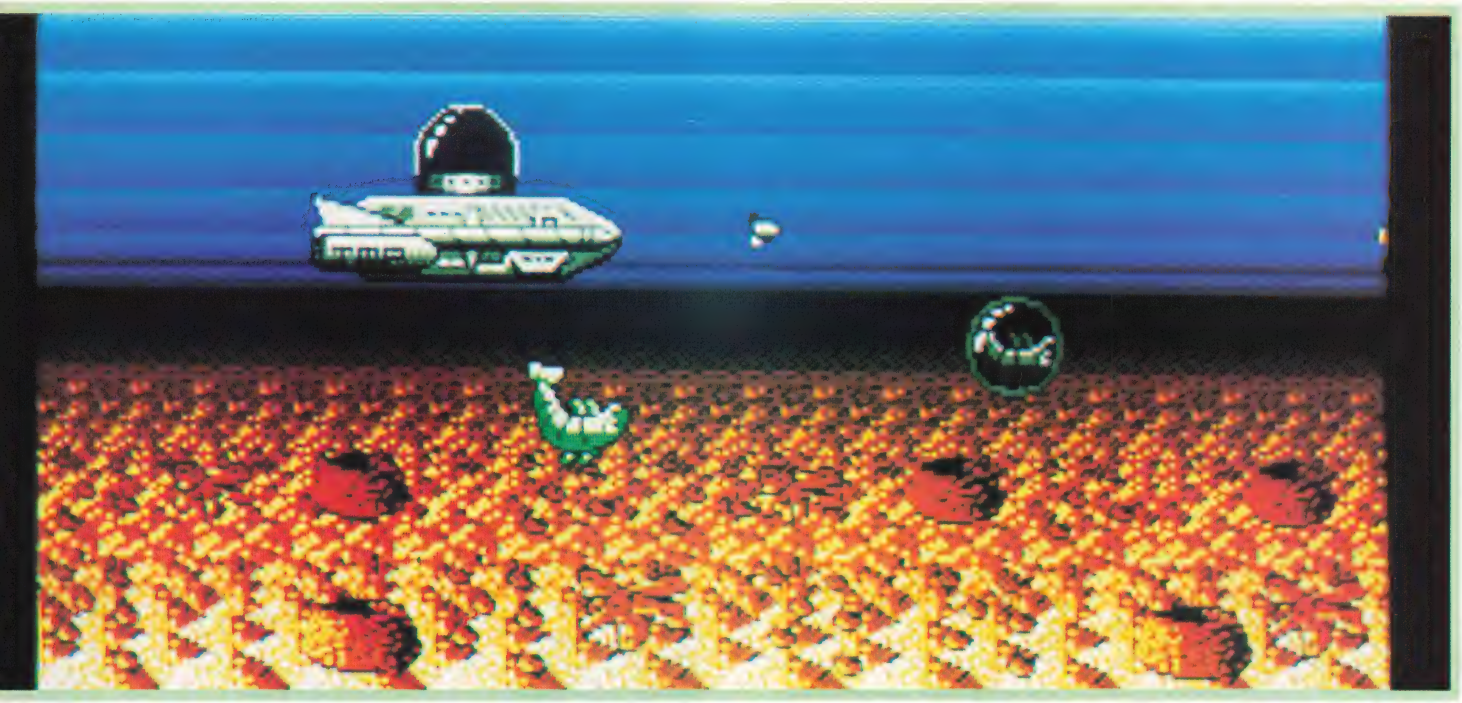
of the level's strict and varying time-limits, and it is also very wise to make a rule to keep well clear of the wicked inhabitants. These evil beasties take the form of eyes, bouncing balls, rolling balls and, most dangerous of all, an indestructible guardian. Whereas most of the aforementioned can be either stunned or shot with Pogo's inbuilt weaponry, this glowing, pink cluster of balls, must be avoided. On its appearance, which is signalled by a shrill, whining sound, your safest bet is to go through one of the tower's doors and through to the other side. But your timing must be pretty spot-on, as even though the tower will rotate, the guardian remains stationary, but this time on the tower's opposite side. Should the guardian or any of the other tower's inhabitants collide with you, Pogo, with a frightened expression on his face, will tumble down several levels, losing valuable time. Should he tumble off the bottom level, his inabilty to swim will become apparent as he drowns, with only a few bubbles marking where he fell in. This, and running out of time, will cost Pogo one of his three, valuable, lives.

The key to ascending the towers comes in the form of the rising elevators. These look like ordinary blocks, but if Pogo is standing on one, and the player presses up on the joystick, the platform will ascend. The platforms only stay up for a limited period, and should Pogo remain on one for too long it will go down again. Sometimes the lift's path will be blocked by a flashing block, and if Pogo touches it he will be knocked from his perch. This is where a certain amount of strategical, not to mention lateral, thinking is needed, as you must search the towers to shoot these blocks, thus preventing them from halting your progress again. Another problem comes in the form of the conveyer belt-like bricks, which try to drag you in the opposite direction to the one you are trying to go - usually into an aliens clutches - but these can be run past by keeping the joystick pushed in the direction you want to go.

At the top of a tower is a huge glass dome, and by walking through the final door, which is beneath this dome,



Having completed a level, Pogo hops into his sub, and then has to shoot fish to gain valuable bonus time on the next tower.



Pogo will automatically place and set his explosives. You will now enter a screen which will award you bonuses for the remaining time and how quick and effective your techinique was. Then, triumphantly, Pogo appears in the doorway and the tower begins to shrink until Pogo is low enough to jump into his re-emerged mini-sub.

As you zoom along underwater to the next tower, the player has a chance to boost his (or her) score in a sub-game. This takes place against one of the most beautifully coloured backdrops you are ever likely to see. Somehow, just by using shades of blue, the programmers have created an unequalled feeling of depth. Combine this with some nifty parallax scrolling and the effect is simply brilliant. As you sit agog admiring the backdrop, you will notice several fish swimming towards you, and by lining up your sub with them and pressing fire you will encapsulate them in an air bubble. Collect these bubbled fish and a considerable bonus will be yours. After a set amount of fish have passed by, the next, more difficult, tower's base will appear, and it will be time for Pogo to get climbing again. STA

Life was beginning to get very dull at the ST Action office when, suddenly, out of nowhere came Nebulus. Never before has an arcade game caused such a commotion at the STA HQ. Hewson's Nebulus has just about every quality that a game needs; great sound, wonderful graphics, tremendous playability and fantastic lasting appeal, and what's more, it even has an original game concept!

The winning formula behind Nebulus is similar to that other smash-hit game, Boulderdash. As well as incorporating arcade gameplay, Nebulus also requires fiendish puzzle solving and split-second timing. Nebulus, without doubt, is bound to become a monster-hit on the ST.

NC

STA Rating 92%

GRAPHICS: 95%
SOUND: 93%

LASTING APPEAL: 91%
ADDICTIVENESS: 90%

DIFFICULTY:AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 20000

KEYBOARD		✘
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE		✘
COLOUR	✔	
MONO		✘
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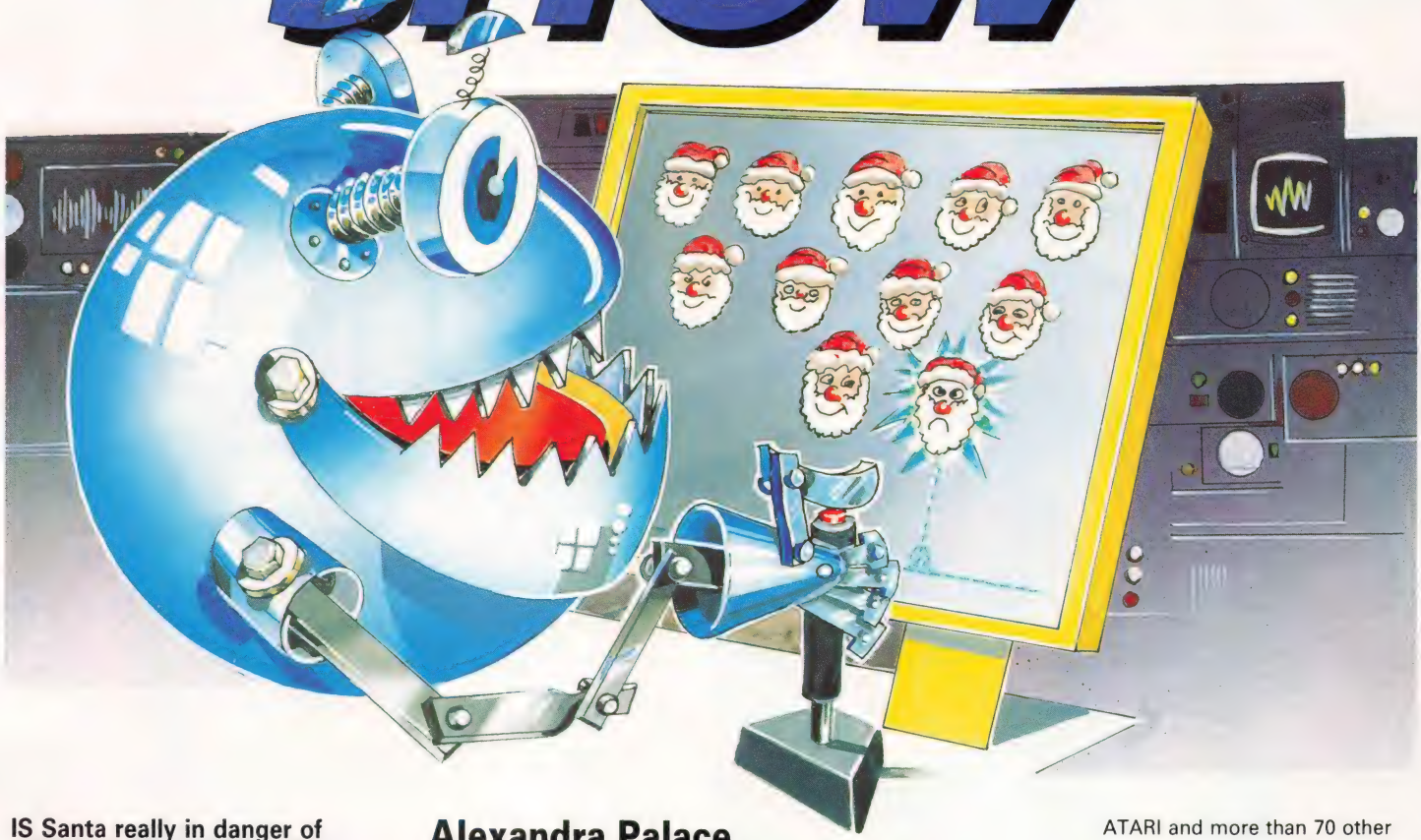

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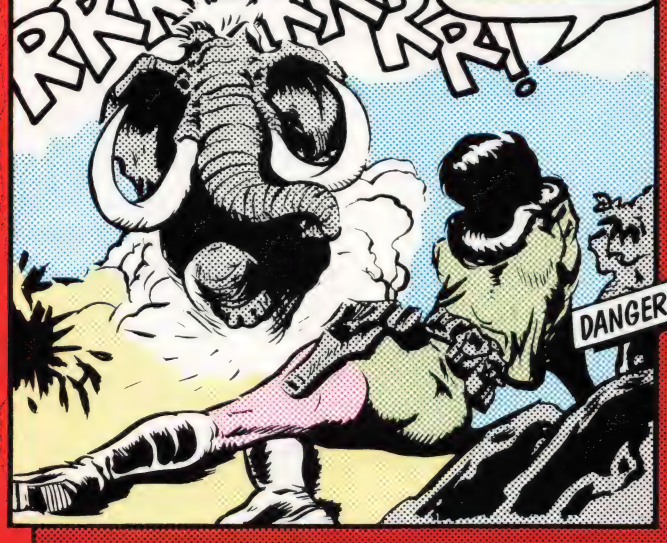

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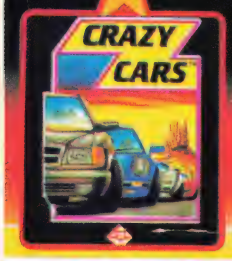

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ARMY MOVES

IMAGINE (£19.95)

This month, like most months, I have reviewed a mixed bag of software, but it is always refreshing to receive a game which is simple and completely unpretentious - the sort of game that doesn't profess to be something that it isn't and can be played without even glancing at the accompanying instructions. The mission begins and, in section one, you are at the wheel of a Willy jeep which is travelling along what must be the longest Pontoon bridge in history.

A constant flow of enemy helicopters fly from right to left and deposit a missile, while the occasional unfriendly jeep trundles along the bridge with the intention of hogging the road. Your jeep can be slowed down by wrenching the joystick to the left, which gives you the whole screen to prepare for the oncoming enemy. The game has been timed so that the helicopter drops its explosive cargo before it can be destroyed and wrenching the joystick upwards and pressing the firebutton sends a volley of missiles into the heavens. Meanwhile, the traffic builds up on the pontoon bridge and the vehicles can either be vaulted or blown up by directing the missile launcher to the right. Additionally, the bridge has been damaged and all potholes must be avoided - the action is very reminiscent of Moonbase by Atari!

Eventually, you reach a helicopter base and the action takes to the air for the next three stages of the game. The chopper flies across desert, sea and jungle and the opposition comes from fighter planes, ground-based missile silos, submarines and look-out posts. The helicopter must be landed and refuelled on fuel sites, whilst dodging the slings and arrows. Nearing the enemy HQ, the final three stages are fought on foot and the action gets ludicrous as squadrons of ferocious Toucans fly in. From the barracks to the main building there is a row of watch towers and the strategy is to clear the way with a barrage of grenades by pulling back on the joystick and pressing the firebutton. Finally, once inside the bunker, you must locate the safe. But in the confines of the bunker, your worst enemy is your own grenades as they bounce off the walls and into your path.

This is all jolly good arcade fun! But analyse your requirements for a game before buying it in order to avoid disappointment. If progressive graphics, innovation and intellectual entertainment are important to you, don't bother! This is arcade entertainment at its most addictive and vacuous.

STA

STA Rating 39%

GRAPHICS: 45%
SOUND: 57%

LASTING APPEAL: 32%
ADDICTIVENESS: 32%

DIFFICULTY: AVE-HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 16100

ASTEROIDS DE LUXE

ATARI (£14.95)

Asteroids has been a favourite in the arcades for years and the free Megaroids disk which came with my ST two years ago still gets a regular airing. There is something very satisfying about blasting massive boulders into specks of dust. The original Asteroids introduced new elements in game-play to arcade frequenters, which are now a regular part of games today, namely, Thrust Propulsion and Hyperspace. Arcade players of years ago couldn't believe that at the touch of a button, they could leave a potentially fatal asteroid belt and be across the other side of the galaxy before they could say 'cor blimey'.

Better later than never, Atari are releasing Asteroids Deluxe which offers double-rubble-trouble for ST users. Arcade frequenters will recognize the small 'V' - shaped craft floundering around the voids of space, but the asteroids have been given a grey paint-job, which certainly makes them look more solid. 'Player One', says the message on the screen, and waiting for a gap between asteroids, pressing the firebutton places your insignificant little craft slap-bang in the middle of the asteroid belt. Many a 10p was lost struggling with the two directional buttons on the arcade machine, but fortunately, this version benefits from quick and responsive joysick control.

The asteroids appear from all directions and continue on their course across the screen. But as soon as they disappear off one side, they immediately appear at the other side. The asteroids crowd around you and the slightest contact results in the loss of a vessel - you have little time to master those tricky thrust propulsion controls! Pushing the joystick forwards activates the forward thrust and slight left and right movements sends it spinning in the corresponding direction. The skill is to make slight directional changes together with short bursts of thrust. The firebutton activates your trusty 'Proton Laser' which shatters the large asteroids into two smaller boulders and another blast makes even smaller rocks. Like the arcade version, sinister flying saucers loom on screen firing their deadly missiles and their destruction yields many points. But shock...horror! A particular class of saucer in this Deluxe version, splinters into triangles which proceed to home in on your vessel. Luckily, pulling back on the joystick activates effective but exhaustible protection shields!

This is boulder-bashing at its best and the exclusion of that cowardly Hyperspace facility forces you to face the music at all times. You can't lose with this one - buy it!

STA

STA Rating 43%

GRAPHICS: 44%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 36%
ADDICTIVENESS: 44%

DIFFICULTY: AVE
1ST DAY SCORE: 18500

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"Nothing has been heard from Audiogenic since they released Impact, their breakout clone. But with the addictive Helter Skelter, have they started a whole new ball game?"

HELTER SKELTER

ASL (£14.95)

Helter Skelter's concept couldn't be simpler: guide your bouncing ball around eighty screens, squashing a certain amount of monsters within a very strict time-limit. This sounds very easy, but the ball uses an unusual control method which makes it very responsive and, initially, difficult to control. Perseverance is the key to control, and after a few games you will get used to the inertia-affected controls and find out just how manoeuvrable the ball really is.

The game can be played by either one or two players, with the two-player option making the game slightly easier due to the fact that both players can share the job of squashing the monsters. On each of the eighty levels, a plethora of platforms are scattered, and it is on these that the nasties lurk. Now these beasties lead a very hectic, if not dull life, simply careering around the screen, falling off platforms, and generally making a nuisance of themselves. The monster that is designated to be killed first is pin-pointed by a conspicuous arrow pointing to its head, and by bouncing on this unfortunate beast you sent him into the hereafter. Do this to all of the monsters, and you will go to the next screen. However, should you make an error in your bounce and squash an unmarked monster, the hit creature will split into two smaller creatures and whizz around the screen even faster, making it even harder to get them all in the time limit; splatting one of the halves causes the other half to, once again, grow to full size. If you fail to squash them all within the time limit, your ball will stop, stunned, with cartoon-like stars flying around its dazed surface.

This is a most deceptive game. Behind those cute graphics and tuneful ditties, hides the most annoying game ever. Helter Skelter treads the very thin line between addictiveness and frustration, and really does give that 'one more go' urge - a feeling that is hard to refuse! Although I wholeheartedly recommend this, I feel that only the most placid of you should buy it - either that or hide your computer where you can't hit it in frustration!

SM

Completing ten screens grants the player a four-letter password, and typing in this code whilst on the title screen, will start the player from the first of ten screens of the level reached.

Occasionally, appearing on the screen are letters of the word EXTRA. This is very similar to the extend feature in Bubble Bobble, and grants the player with an extra life. Care must be taken when collecting the letters, though, as collecting the same letter twice takes away the one you have already collected, which means you must wait until it comes around again. Occasional time bonuses appear too, and collecting these extends your ever-decreasing time limit.

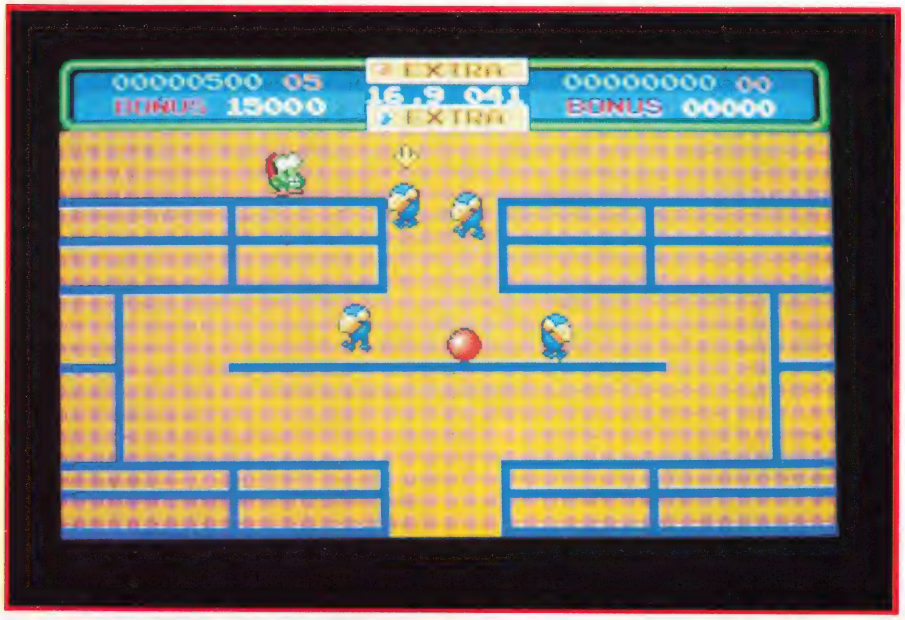
Should you grow tired of the levels in the game, Audiogenic have included a very simple-to-use screen designer, and by using this you can create new screens, or edit those pre-defined, making them easier or, if you are a total masochist even harder.

STA

At last, a game so wonderfully frustrating, it hurts! The game reeks of arcade action and is a must for any of you arcade junkies. The basic game idea is so simple that it's ridiculous. But, like Boulderdash, Helter Skelter's simple gameplay leaves room for heaps of addictiveness. Alone, the game is great and the two-player mode is outstanding.

How refreshing it is to see a game that succeeds on its own merits, instead of relying on digitized speech and graphics. Audiogenic's Helter Skelter is undoubtedly one of the better games available for the ST, and certainly one of the most annoying. I only hope that it receives the credit it deserves.

NC



Frustrating fun in Audiogenic's new bounce' em-up

STA Rating

82%

GRAPHICS:77%
SOUND: 75%

LASTING APPEAL: 75%
ADDICTIVENESS: 92%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 200200

"It seems that 1988 is going to be the year of the Roadblasters clone; a similar thing happened to Gauntlet last year."

OVERLANDER

ELITE (£19.99)

Earth, again, is in a bad way. Years back, in the twentieth century, scientists had noticed a hole appearing in the ozone layer above the North Pole and warned the authorities. Unfortunately, nobody else got to hear about it, and people carried on using their hairsprays and deodorants - before long, the radiation had scorched the Earth, leaving it practically uninhabitable.

The survivors split into three groups: The main group built huge, isolated underground cities, and continued with as normal an existence as they could. The second group, the Land-dwellers, continued living on the surface, ambushing and hijacking any supplies or vehicles going to and from the cities. Populations were dying out, so the third group were called to help - the Overlanders.

The Overlanders have only one passion in life - their pre-holocaust vehicles. These vehicles have been customised to be stronger and faster, and have the facility to house armaments. But all these extras cost money, and the brave earn this by risking the City Run. This consists of either a supply run. Or if you are one of the best Overlanders, a top secret mission. You play one of these rare elite, and play begins with you, about to be briefed on your latest mission.

Having filled your tank with the required amount of gas, you arrive at the next options screen - the armarments supply. Here you can select from a cornucopia of the deadly: guided missiles, fire bombs, wheel blades, as well as some useful enhancements to your vehicle, such as, bullet-proofing and armour plating - though these will only survive one hit each. Weapon selection is a key part to surviving the tortuous journeys. For instance, fire bombs, though visually impressive, have very little effect on speeding vehicles. So it is generally best to stick to add ons such as the aforementioned wheel blades and armour plating. When you have exhausted your cash funds or amassed sufficient extras, the actual game can begin.

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MOUSE		✘
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MONO		✘
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Occupying the bottom third of the

Every game has its spin-offs; just look at all the Breakout clones. This time, however, the plagiarists have arrived before the original. Last month we saw Titus Software's 'Fire and Forget', this month it is the turn of Elite's Overlander. The grand-daddy of them all, U.S. Gold's Roadblasters, is still not available, and, when compared to Overlander, it may just turn out to be something of a disappointment.

Overlander is a startlingly good game: nothing too taxing on the mind, just pure outright arcade action. The game's graphics are breathtaking, especially in the way that the road rolls and curves around the rugged landscape. The gameplay, too, is superb. The mixture of hectic driving and savage survival blend together tremendously to make Overlander one of the best games of its kind - for now at least.

NC

I know that making a comparison between Overlander and Roadblasters isn't fair. But I think that, to top this, U.S. Gold's conversion will need to be absolutely brilliant. The game gives an incredible feeling of speed, and the hills look superb as you whizz over them - though it's a pity the programmers used a bold stripey road as found in other games of this type. Plenty to shoot at; plenty to swerve past. What more could any budding Mad Max ask for?

SM

Overlander is a game of survival, run the gauntlet through the barren wastelands, avoiding manic motorists and gun-toting hitchikers.

Budget carefully, your life depends on it.

STA Rating

69%

GRAPHICS: 73%
SOUND: 53%

LASTING APPEAL: 67%
ADDICTIVENESS: 72%

DIFFICULTY: AVE-HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 17500

I wonder whether Lennon and McCartney's classic song 'The Long and Winding Road' was premonitory of the dozens of road-racing games that computer users would have to endure in the future. 'The Long and Stripey Road' would have been a more apt title! The thought of miles of striped track failed to excite me, but the optional weaponry screen sparked some enthusiasm! Rocket launchers, missiles and flame throwers on the freeway? Suddenly, I liked the sound of this game! This Mad Max School of Motoring has one rule: 'clear the road, Buddy, I'm coming through!' Overlander starts off with explosive and wild action and continues in the same vein as that stripey road goes on and on. Pointless, mindless, destructive and great fun - for a limited period!

JS

screen is a view of your in-car dashboard - which shows how many of your selected weapons are left, as well as your fuel limit. Unfortunately, the road is striped, and although it's supposed to convey the illusion of speed, it does nothing but cause eye-strain. Your car is capable of reaching 180 mph, but is not the fastest vehicle on the road. The land-dwellers have motorbikes and cars far superior than your own. It is here you realise which extras you should have taken! No sooner are you on your way, an American yellow taxi-cab comes careering towards you. You have two choices: blasting him with your bonnet-placed gun, or simply avoiding him.

To enable you to see when a vehicle is approaching, a red car icon with two directional arrows is on your dashboard. When one of the arrows flashes you can anticipate when the enemy will appear on screen. As if this were not enough to cope with, roadside hazards include: men in dug-outs, sporting machine guns which tear into your car; overturned cars (presumably other, failed, city runners); trees and rocks. These do not pose too much of a problem, providing you don't stray close to the edge of the road, and can be taken out with a short burst of fire.

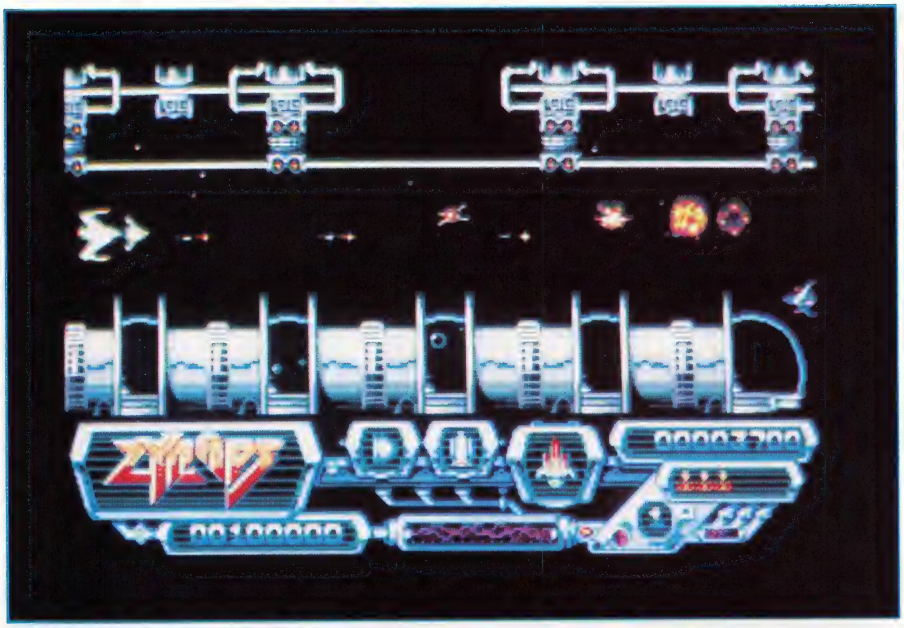
Once you have passed these early obstacles things start hotting up. Huge, beautifully animated lorries loom up on the horizon, spouting petrol bombs which cause more than their fair share of headaches. But with a quick wrench of the joystick, and a burst of your machine gun, this huge vehicle should explode, leaving you to pass. After two more of these collossi, you speed on - straight into a strategically placed barrier! Having pulled yourself together again, and made a mental note to be slightly more cautious, you swerve in and out until you are onto a clear straight again. The road then repeats itself with the obstacles being slightly more frequent and, if you survive, then that mission is complete and the rest of the money is yours.

If you are successful, another, riskier mission will be offered. The cash offered will be higher, allowing more accessories. Unfortunately, since you have been gone, the price of fuel has increased too. With each mission, the sky gets lighter and the roads more dangerous..You continue taking missions until you exhaust your six lives. No wonder they say it's tough on the streets!

STA

"Certain contingents of the no-good alien community have still not learned their lesson and are continuing with their despicable invasion plans. Will there be no rest for us space war-vets?"

Collect pods for extra weapons and ship modifications in Hewson's new shoot'em-up.



ZYNAPS

HEWSON (£19.95)

The prospect of reviewing yet another shoot'em-up is not one I look forward to, as too many are bland looking, not to mention boring to play. Zynaps, thankfully, looks very pleasant, boasting attractive back-drops and smooth scrolling, but, sadly, it falls at the game-play hurdle. The alien formations are a little too frequent and, initially, a lot of lives are lost before any extra features can be collected. This causes a lot of frustration and practically killed any compulsion I had to continue.

If the difficulty level were just a shade easier I would not hesitate in recommending this to anybody. But as it stands, it should only be bought by the more persevering gamers out there.

SM

Zynaps is an instantly forgettable and not particularly exciting name for a game and on learning that it was yet another scrolling space shoot'em up, I must confess to feeling underwhelmed. But apathy achieves nothing and so with the enthusiasm and determination which rushed through my veins as a young and headstrong space cadet, I prepared to take on the alien forces within Zynaps. My craft, the Scorpion, certainly looked nothing special - in fact, much the same as a hundred fighters I had piloted before! The weaponry specifications were impressive though, boasting Pulse Lasers which are ideal for heavy-duty alien blasting, Plasma Bombs that can wreak havoc on ground bases, and Homing Missiles with exploding warheads. But the ultimate weapon is the Heat-Seeking missile! These beauties come complete with Automatic, Target-acquisition Intelligence, which locks on to the most elusive target.

At first, the Scorpion is equipped with basic lasers and this special weaponry can only be activated by collecting greater power with the so-called Fuel Scoop. Holding down the firebutton activates the Scoop and the ship changes colour to indicate that it is operational. Then the Scorpion is capable of absorbing the fuel pods and a Weaponry Activation Indicator shows the craft has been endowed with greater laser power, bomb throwers or the Homing and Seeking missiles. However, these enhanced features are not always to your advantage! Greater acceleration can make the craft more difficult to manoeuvre in limited airspace, and although the heavier and more powerful weaponry is more effective and devastating, it cannot be sprayed as liberally as the standard lasers.

Accompanied by typical, scrolling shoot'em-up music, the Scorpion begins its long and perilous horizontal journey across the back of a massive alien space station. This will be familiar battle-ground to all space-war campaigners and the appearance and response of the defending alien forces is really rather predictable. At first, the enemy onslaught comprises small, streamlined jets which scroll from right to left in various military formations and at a constant speed. Then, more organic-looking craft propel themselves along like jellyfish. In most cases, a spray of laser fire will eliminate an alien craft, but some leave a highly sensitive 'mine' which continues to travel across the screen.

Thanks to years of experience, I steamed through the first stages of the alien defence with comparative ease and I was beginning to grow bored with the predictability of it all, when suddenly things began to heat up. As if the game recognized that I was a force to contend with, many aspects conspired to end my short reign of domination. At once, the alien forces increased their air attack and available air space was a rare commodity. Meanwhile, the planet-bound defence made their presence known, but that was nothing that a few strategically dropped Plasma bombs couldn't solve - providing you had time to activate the fuel scoop! Alien Command ships add considerable muscle to the alien forces and require numerous laser firings to destroy and the all-powerful Motherships which occasionally loom on screen are practically indestructible and prove fatal to the most experienced pilot. Add to this a constant flow of asteroids and space debris and you can see that this game becomes a battle for air space.

STA

STA Rating

63%

GRAPHICS: 72%
SOUND: 65%

LASTING APPEAL: 59%
ADDICTIVENESS: 61%

DIFFICULTY: AVE-HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 10300

Zynaps is rather an unusual name for a game, but that's about as far as the originality goes. This is all jolly good alien-blitzing fun, but the theme really has been done to death and Zynaps has nothing new to offer. There are countless scrolling shoot'em-ups available and I have played and enjoyed most of them. But the only way to keep this genre from wandering from the realms of impossibility to the doldrums of predictability, is to keep it fresh with new and surprising features.

JS

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"Bomb Jack is, without a doubt, one of the most playable of the "Old School" games. Are we to expect a revival of licences that actually contain gameplay?"

BOMB JACK

ELITE (£19.95)

I first encountered Bomb Jack in a seedy arcade way back in 1985. It was not the most popular machine there, but there was always someone playing it. Deciding to give it a whirl, I watched whilst a bespectacled kid flew an unimpressive sprite around a platformed screen, collecting bombs as he went. Undaunted, I had a go and found that, whilst it was not the most graphically astounding game at the time, it had a certain grip that kept me hooked.

About eighteen months ago, Elite released the official conversion onto the awaiting public. It was met with mixed feelings, with Amstrad owners getting the closest copy, but for the main part it was a credible conversion. Now, surprisingly, Elite have given us lucky ST owners the chance to follow our caped hero's travels, as he defuses bombs all around the world.

You begin the game with three lives, placed in front of the Sphinx and a pyramid. Present on the screen are several platforms, and dotted around these platforms are several bombs - one of which is lit. Your aim is to collect these explosives, and having done so, you progress onto the next level. Should you, by any chance, collect all twenty-three of the bombs in the order they are lit, you will receive a massive fifty-thousand points bonus. This bonus reduces by twenty thousand points for each sparkling bomb missed.

Hindering your attempts to defuse the bomb, though, are a handful of odd creatures - metallic footballs, birds, robots and flying saucers - and contact with any of these will cause an untimely loss of life for Jack. So that not all the odds are stacked against you, there are two bonuses to be had. These take the form of monogrammed capsules, and bounce around the screen waiting to be collected. These capsules relinquish: a very rare, extra life; a bonus of a hundred points, or even better; a spell that turns the nasties into smiling faces - each of which can be collected for a bonus.

Jack's controls are a joy, and he is remarkably manoeuvrable. Pressing up and fire launches him into an enormous leap, and left and right movements will guide him as he flies. Pulling down will speed his descent, though if you wish to stay stationary, repeatedly pressing fire enables Jack to hover.

The game spans five screens, which repeat after the fifth has been completed - albeit with a different layout of platforms. And with each level, the pace, not to mention the nasties, gets more frantic. **STA**

I first played Bomb Jack three years ago on the Commodore 64. Working in a retail environment, its arrival failed to inspire me - coals to Newcastle, an unwelcomed addition to shelves which were already straining under the weight of hundreds of multi-level arcade games. However, Bomb Jack was somehow different and it sold like hot cakes - we could hardly meet the demand! Could this be attributed to Bomb Jack himself? He is a cute and endearing little character! Could it be the famous landmarks in the background which are of great historical interest to game-players? No, it unashamedly exploits one of the most addictive forms of arcade entertainment, which was inspired by the original Pac Man and copied by just about everybody else - collecting objects (in this case, bombs). Bomb Jack hasn't got the variety of Bubble Bobble, the brilliance of Boulderdash or the craziness of Cracked, but it's not bad!

JS

STA Rating

55%

GRAPHICS: 53%
SOUND: 52%

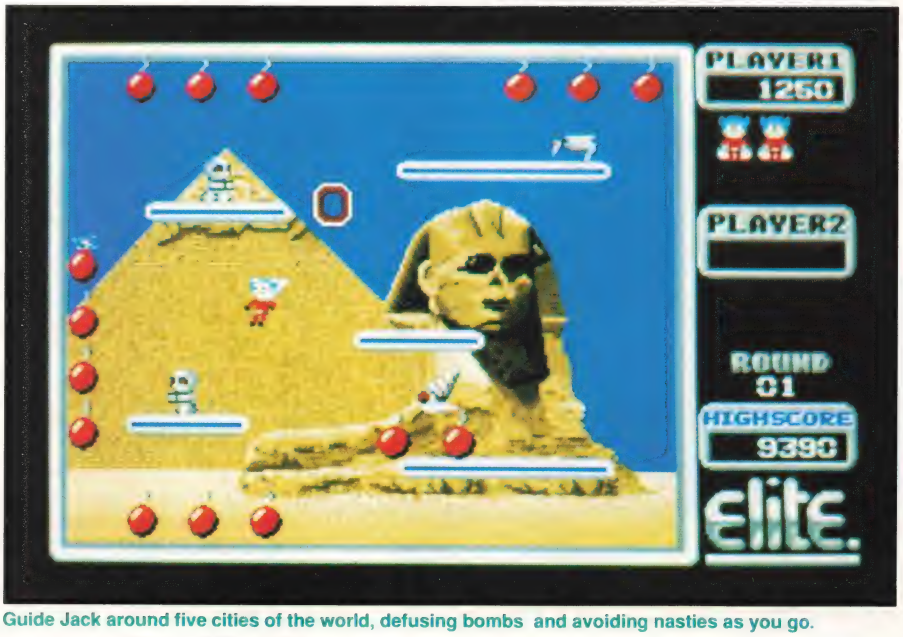
LASTING APPEAL: 66%
ADDICTIVENESS: 60%

DIFFICULTY: AVE
1ST DAY SCORE: 20080

It's good to see old classics like this appear - they just ooze playability. Sadly, Elite haven't spruced it up graphically; it would be nice to have had prettier backdrops and better defined sprites. The tunes are lively, but will have you reaching for the volume control after a while.

An average conversion that could have been so much better - a flawed masterpiece really.

SM



Guide Jack around five cities of the world, defusing bombs and avoiding nasties as you go.

"Dragon World is under attack! Don your trendy red Lacoste jumper and matching, winged boots and go and give 'em hell!"

SPACE HARRIER

ELITE (£19.95)

There were many doubts concerning the conversion of Space Harrier. The arcade game's graphics were large, smooth, fast and very colourful. If a conversion was to be a success it would have to match these qualities, otherwise it would become yet another abysmal failure.

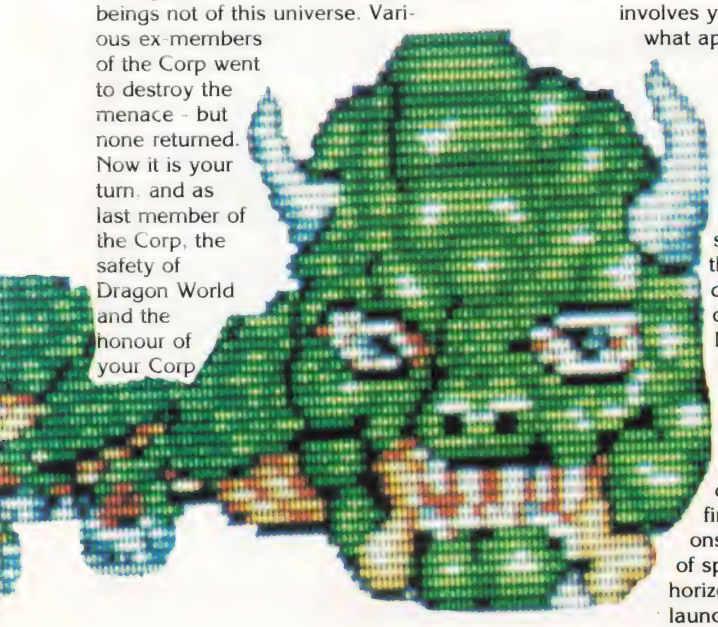
Thankfully, somehow, Elite have managed to recreate all of the coin-op's original features, bar hydraulics. Space Harrier is a fast and furious shoot'em-up - often too fast! The game plays, sounds and looks great. However, like the original, its lasting appeal is also questionable. I soon began to tire of the rather repetitive action. Space Harrier is undoubtedly an 'A1' conversion, though it's a pity the original coin-op wasn't a little more inspiring.

NC

Space Harrier must surely rank as one of the all-time classic coin-ops, along with the likes of Space Invaders, Pac Man and, more recently, Out Run. The arcade machine was a huge, sprawling hydraulic beast which tossed you around in co-ordinance with the character on screen. This novel idea made the machine both a crowd puller and, more importantly for Sega, a money spinner, and it also made up for the rather staid game-play.

KEYBOARD		✘
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE	✔	
COLOUR	✔	
MONO		✘
520ST	✔	
1040ST	✔	

You play the part of a seasoned member of the Space Harrier Corp. The Corp used to be a strong-arm band of galactic policemen restoring peace in troubled areas. Several years ago, their peace mission complete, the Corp disbanded with all the members getting a healthy pension. Then one day, a message from Dragon World was received stating it had been invaded by strange beings not of this universe. Various ex-members of the Corp went to destroy the menace - but none returned. Now it is your turn, and as last member of the Corp, the safety of Dragon World and the honour of your Corp depends on you.



Driven on by a brilliant, boppy tune, your soldier, armed with a pulse laser that will destroy practically anything, is viewed from behind in first person perspective, whilst the planet surface scrolls smoothly towards you, carrying both ground-based and airborne problems.

Dragon World is split into twelve individually named cities and, obviously, the difficulty level gets higher on each. Should you be fortunate enough to complete five of the levels, there is a very nice, but totally pointless, score-boosting section which involves you riding on the back of what appears to be a giant caterpillar.

Moot, the starting level, is relatively easy. The city was a lush, green paradise, but now the beautiful forests are just obstacles you must shoot or avoid. Shooting the vegetation or any of the deadly floating rocks (they obviously haven't heard of Newton's law of gravity) results in an impressive explosion which is very pretty, and with several on screen at once, the game looks like a pyromaniac's dream. You receive your first taste of the alien onslaught next. A formation of space ships enters the horizon, and as they appear, launch a volley of shots. Contact with any of these causes your soldier to buck and fall in agony. Having died, your character reappears and is, for a limited period of time, immune to any form of attack. The final obstacle of the level is a writhing, snake-like dragon. This dangerous beast breathes a long trail of flame which you must avoid or, once again, you will die. Shooting its head causes it to change into different colours, and after it reaches purple any shot will destroy it. The body burns segment by segment as you pass it - most effective!

The other eleven levels all follow the same routine, but the meanies get faster and fire more shots at you. Lots of

As you may have guessed I am quite a fan of arcade games. The hydraulics of the arcade version of Space Harrier are certainly appealing, initially. But once the thrill has worn off, you are left with only a pseudo-3D shoot'em-up. However, Elite's conversion should more than cater for any fans of the arcade. Graphics really are top-notch, using some brilliant colouring. The sound, too, is excellent and only let down by the dodgy "Get Ready!" and the hissy scream. Even if you have never heard of Space Harrier, I feel this is worth a buy, because licence or no licence, it is a good blast'em game.

SM

It's "PLANE" to see that your Space Harrier is in trouble.

STA Rating 75%

GRAPHICS: 87%
SOUND: 63%

LASTING APPEAL: 73%
ADDICTIVENESS: 77%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 1930466

What makes a successful arcade conversion? Of course, it is how accurately the converters interpret the graphics, sound and game-play. Providing the company has the skill, this is quite achievable for the majority of arcade games, but there are some exceptions. The arcade version of Space Harrier relies considerably on the incredible hydraulics which rock, buck, jolt and do their best to part you from your lunch. Not even Elite could achieve that! However, the graphics are fantastic and the mouse controls are an effective substitute for the loose and floppy joystick on the arcade version. I question the longevity of Space Harrier, but in both formats it is an explosive game with exciting and uncontrollable action. Sadly, it lacks variety and staying-power.

JS

weird beings appear for the chance to take a pop at you, and these take the forms of such oddities as: flying mushrooms(!), laser-spitting butterflies, black balls that are only vulnerable when they open into three sections, and bazooka-bearing robots.

Moot's blastable jungle is just a walk in the park compared to the later levels. Huge, laser-resistant Ionic columns and large crystals are just two of the ground-based objects that cannot be shot and must be avoided - something that is not easy when you are whizzing along at several hundred miles an hour!

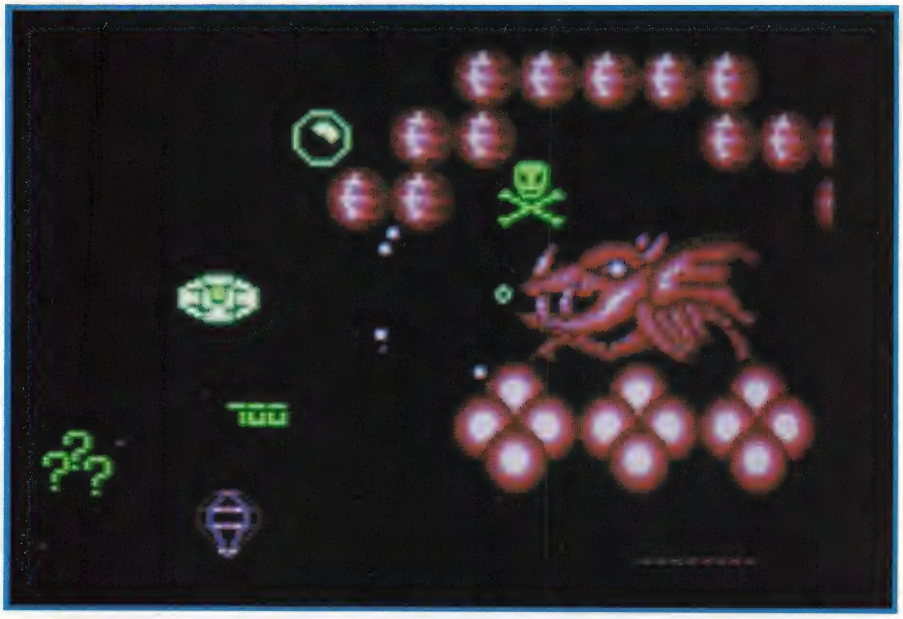
Undoubted graphic masterpieces of the game are the end-of-level guardians. These beasts are incredibly fast and destroying them is a matter of good timing and nifty joystick wielding. They come in several forms: two-headed dragons - almost twice as hard to kill as the one-headed beggars; A metallic being surrounded by rotating stone faces which must be shot first; and a giant version of the weapon-bearing robots.

The game ends when all your lives are lost, though it has an option I feel should be in more games, namely, a continue option, which can only be used four times, but gives the player a fairer chance. Should you complete all twelve cities, after brief congratulations, you return to Moot, where the aliens are back with a vengeance. **STA**

The end-of-level Dragon is very hard to kill, requiring several direct hits to the head. When a hit is taken, the beast changes colour, this showing it getting weaker. It eventually turns purple and one more hit gives it a sticky end.

"Statesoft's "Boulder Dash" started an epidemic of clones, a few of which filter out in new releases even now. How nice it is to see something that takes that basic essence and adds to it."

Netherworld, another exercise in gem collection?



NETHERWORLD

HEWSON(£19.99)

This is a strange game and, when given the task of reviewing it, I put it off as long as possible - something I now regret! The game is very playable, with you racing against both unconquerable odds and a strict time limit, yet it is totally engrossing. Graphics are unobtrusive but they work well - the sound effects are pretty forgettable. A good, unusual game from Hewson.

SM

There you are scooting along in your new sporty spheroid, when before you know it, you slip a dimension - would you credit it! This new world and its inhabitants are like nothing you have seen before, and you desperately wish to leave. You find that the only way to leave is by a form of toll, and that if you collect enough of the local money you will be able to buy your passage to safety.

The game is spread over twelve levels, and you must guide your inertia-affected craft through the eight-way scrolling levels in search of the diamonds - avoiding, as far as possible, anything that looks vaguely hostile.

All the levels feature beautiful, stylised graphics and these are used to show walls and the various nasty inhabitants. These horrid beasties take the form of acid bubble-spitting dragons; alien generators that look like beehives; eggs; and a goat's head which spits deadly-to-touch poison. However, should you be faced by one the aforementioned dragons or generators, and it spits a bubble or an alien at you, fear not, for shooting these normally releases a bonus. These bonuses should be collected for either a score increase or the ability to kill any aliens or generators. You can even speed up your ship to three times its normal power (though any more than three will reduce it to the speed of a Robin Reliant). The levels are all split up by walls, and access to another part can be granted by either smashing your way through with a collected brick-smash icon, or you can use one of the few teleports.

If you manage to collect all the allotted diamonds in the time limit, you must make your way to a teleport. This will warp you to the inter-level bonus screen. This stage is quite tricky, but if you complete it you are rewarded with a very useful extra life. But if the time limit expires, you must re-start the entire level from the beginning.

As you progress through the increasingly difficult levels, new monsters will be found along with new features. These are really innovative, with the likes of diamond squeezers and metamorphis walls allowing the player to push normal rocks into them and turn them into valuable gems.

The game ends when all twelve levels are completed and all the required diamonds are recovered. Then, and only then, will your little ship be able to go home. **STA**

Netherworld is based on the Boulderdash theme with the gem-gobbling cave-mite replaced by a small spacecraft. The current trend is for large, colourful, pixel-clad alien characterizations and this gem-collecting theme has been based around this new fad. Each screen is a labyrinth of colourful graphics and the aim, like so many Boulderdash-style games before, is to collect all of the gems in order to progress to the next level of the game. The graphics are interesting and the theme is, of course, a winner.

JS

STA Rating 65%

GRAPHICS: 60%
SOUND: 50%
LASTING APPEAL: 72%
ADDICTIVENESS: 63%
DIFFICULTY: AVE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

COMPETITION WINNERS

ELECTRIC DREAMS SOFTWARE MOTORCYCLE GRAND PRIX COMPETITION

Congratulations to Chris Marron of Isleworth, Middlesex! Chris was the lucky winner of our Electric Dreams Competition. Chris, and his brother, enjoyed an all-expenses-paid day out at the British Motor Cycle Grand Prix.

The 25 runners up, who each receive an exclusive Pepsi promotion poster, are: C.Brown, Birkenhead. G.Gardener, Clapham. A.Thompson, Liverpool. R.Munday, Laindon. A Wootton, Frimley Green. Chris Bennett, Chelmsford. A.Crossley, Manchester. W.Chapman, Porthtowan. S.Wilson, Carlisle. M.Forey, Sunbury on Thames. P.Kellett, Chorley. J.Leonard, Craigavon. M.Lacey, Retford. J.Maydew, Stockport. M.Fraser, Edinburgh. P.Holland, Malvern. R.Smith, Coxwold. S.Parsons, Bradford. J.Neate, Bristol. A.Price, Broughton. R.Andrew, Welshpool. C.Coventry, London. L.Bartley, Huntingdon. K.Clements, Edinburgh. C.Corker, Chichester.

Just in case you wanted to know the correct answers, here they are:

1. The British Motorcycle Grand Prix is held at: Castle Donnington.
2. The British rider for Pepsi Team Suzuki is: Rob McElnea.

U.S. GOLD COMPETITION RESULTS

The lucky winner of the day trip to U.S. Gold's headquaters in Birmingham is James Whewell. Well done to James, and to the 15 runners-up who each receive a U.S. Gold game of their choice.

The runners up are: I.Munday, Camberley. I.Wood, Coventry. R.Evans, Welshpool. C.Cooper, Leigh-on-Sea. L.Ellison, Liverpool. P.Reynolds, London. M.Burley, Purley. J.Pratt, Ashby-de-la-Zouch. M.Clavering, Ashington. G.Fisher, Taunton. B.Thomas, London. C.Downs, South Shields. R.Oliver, Stamford. I.Scott, Newcastle upon Tyne. G.Smith, Bognor Regis.

The correct answers were:

1: The odd one out was C, Tiddlywinks.
2: Out Run was picture C
3:Gauntlet II was picture A
4:Mickey Mouse was picture B

Congratulations to all our winners, and commiserations to all those who entered but weren't lucky enough to win.

QUALSOFT

SPORTS STRATEGY

CODA

FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT GAMES THE ST DESERVES

Football management games, both Soccer and American Football, have the potential to produce excellent strategy games of some considerable sophistication. QUALSOFT produced League Division One in 1983, and Mexico 86 in 1985, but otherwise the implementation has been infantile. When Coda sent me HEADCOACH for the BBC Micro, 2 years ago, I saw an American Football computer game for the first time that measured up to the same standards. QUALSOFT is pleased to offer Atari ST users "World of Soccer" and "Head Coach v3", two games I honestly believe will fill a yawning gap for those looking for realistic simulations of the real games.

Malcolm Howard, QUALSOFT

WORLD OF SOCCER

International management is the ultimate challenge in soccer. To build a squad of players to defeat the ball playing skills of Brazil, the fluid play of Holland, the organisation of West Germany, the counter-attacking of Italy, and the many varied styles of many others, demands an insight into the game rare amongst managers let alone fans. Do you exploit a team's weaknesses, or play to your own strengths? Do you attack down the flank with wingers, or pierce the centre with powerful midfield running? Do you play a flat back four, or use a sweeper or libero?

In "World of Soccer", players are not just attackers/defenders/midfield but goal poachers, play makers, ball winners, wingers, left, right and centre backs, sweepers (19 types of player in all). The results of matches are determined by simulated soccer matches controlled by the skills of the opposing players. Strategy is determined by the skills you build into your squad, and tactics by the particular skills you use to defeat particular teams. Substitutions and tactical moves can be made during the match to change or reinforce your plans.

For four years, through the Qualifying and Final stages of the European Championship and the World Cup, you will guide the European team of your choice. You can prepare for the competitions with friendly matches of your choosing, developing your strategy to match the in-form players at your disposal. Success is there for the taking, but it will need earning.

Choose from 33 European squads. The 4 UK home countries have 16 man squads which can be increased to 36 with players of your own. A customisation program will allow squads for any of the 33 countries to be created.

HEAD COACH v3

On the field 220lb blocks of concrete-on-legs collide, while a small man in a suit paces the touchline stroking his chin. He's the Head Coach. He has more tactical skill in his little finger than the MCC can muster in the entire club. Third down and 9, he signals to his quarterback. The quarterback takes the snap back into the pocket dummies to his star running back, wheels to the right skirting two defenders, motions to throw to his rightside wide receiver and then swings his pass back over the pack to his open Tight End. He catches and makes another five yards before being grounded. An eleven yard gain and another first down, thanks to 2 hours of rehearsal the previous Thursday afternoon. The crowd cheer the quarterback but the head coach knows that his Right Guard really deserves the credit. This is American Football, Chess with mobile human pieces.

It's your first season as a Head Coach in the NFL and you face two pre-season games. You must give as many of your 45 players a run out to see how they've come through the close season. Through these matches and the time spent at training camp you must devise your game plan to face your first NFL game. Over the next 16 games you will meet the likes of the Chicago Bears, the Washington Redskins, the Dallas Cowboys, the LA Raiders (hiss). Each game will need a new plan to exploit the weaknesses and nullify the strengths of such teams, and in the game you will probe their defense and try to stifle their offense. Success over these 16 matches will put you into the playoffs and in sight of the Superbowl. Failure will give you the best of the college draft, which will allow you to make up for the deficiencies you must by now have discovered in your side. Providing of course that the club keeps you on . . .

Let us be straight , Head coach v3 is NOT an arcade game. It's a sophisticated game based on American Football. For those who already understand something about the game, it's a chance to find out just how much they really know. For those to whom the game appeals but is something of a mystery, then Head Coach v3 is the ideal way to find out what the game is all about. In the match itself, you have a choice of 27 offensive plays and 21 defensive plays, and so you can bias your plays to suit the skills of your squad and negate those of the opposition. The training camp will give you an insight into the current performance of your players, even checking their speed in 40 yard sprints. There's only one thing that can prevent your team from eventually achieving a Superbowl place; YOU! But we warn you, this game is ADDICTIVE.

"World of Soccer" and "Head Coach v3" are available from QUALSOFT at £17.50 and £19.95 respectively.

QUALSOFT **Tel: 0438** **Dept. ACT** **721936** **18 Hazlemere Road** **Stevenage SG2 8RX**	Please supply: World of Soccer ❐ £17.50 Head Coach v3 ❐ £19.95	Name: Address: Access No. (if applicable)

"MAD! That's what Mastertronic have decided to call their 16-bit software label! It stands for Mastertronic Added Dimension. But just what is this added dimension that the ex-budget boys profess to put in their software?"

VECTORBALL

MASTERTRONIC (£9.95)

STA Rating 52%

GRAPHICS: 56%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 53%
ADDICTIVENESS: 50%

DIFFICULTY:AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE:N/A

This is an odd game and I'm not particularly impressed by the unnecessarily awkward controls, the graphical presentation or the strange angle of the pitch. The computer-controlled droid is gifted with Pele-like skills and seems unaffected by the awkward directional controls. As usual, the game is more playable when two fallible humans are battling against each other.

JS

Currently, there are four software companies developing or releasing a game which combines elements of football, ice hockey and rollerball. Vector is one such game, although Mastertronic state that their game is: 'A complex blend of the speed of ice hockey, the precision of Netball and the complex curves of Crown Green Bowls.' The game loads to a repetitive but pleasant piece of digitized music, which helps to soothe your nerves as you frantically press various keys, firebuttons and mouse buttons in an attempt to access the game. Finally, a menu screen appears, although it is not the option screen which is printed in the instruction manual. You have the choice of a one or two-player game and a selection of pitch styles. Finally, you are informed that a pitch is being generated.

Two droids which resemble the statuettes given at the Oscar awards, stand in the centre of the pitch, each sporting a different coloured Mohican haircut so that you can identify your player. The pitch itself is an isometric projection which scrolls as the droids advance up the field, and each of the five pitches is either covered with ditches, hills, ridges, valleys or a combination of all four. If you have selected the one-player option, the computer controls the dormant droid and the ball is positioned in the centre of the pitch for the start of the match. The two droids face towards the opposite ends of the pitch and the aim of the game is to steal the ball from your opponent, maintain possession and manoeuvre the ball into the goal area at the other end of the pitch. Because of the angle of the game-screen, confusion reigns as the joystick has to be wrenched from left to right to move the droid up the pitch.

Like that irritating rule in netball, your droid is unable to move while it is holding the ball, which adheres to its feet. Therefore, in order to advance up the field, the ball has to be kicked by pressing the firebutton and the droid must be moved quickly to intercept it before the opposition muscle in. The power of the shot can be regulated by pushing the joystick upwards which extends the droid's neck and dictates the power of the shot. The best tactic is to keep the ball in close possession. But like the basketball rule, the time that your droid can hold the ball without moving is limited, and when that period elapses, the ball is automatically kicked away in whatever direction he is facing. You can steal the ball away from your opponent by blocking the droid's path and kicking the ball cleanly from his feet. Alternatively, you can adopt dirty tricks, extend your droid's neck, barge your opponent off the ball and send it reeling across the ice.

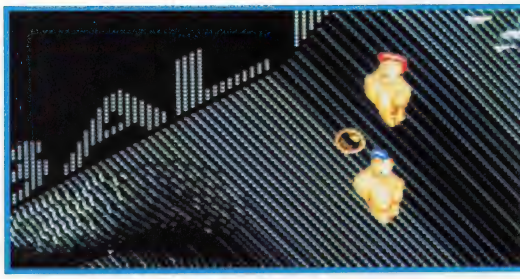
Of course, the aim of the game is to score more goals than the opposition, but all the dirty tricks tactics must be adopted to outsmart the computer. The pitch is surrounded by a fence and the ball can be bounced off at an angle, like the puck in ice hockey, and the contours of the pitch can be used for curve shots to confuse the opposition. Additionally, an excellent way of anticipating when your opponent intends to shoot is to watch for the opposing droid's head extending. **STA**

Vectorball reminds me of an isometric version of the old "A 'n' F" title, "Xeno" (also programmed by Binary Design, if I remember rightly). Both are supposed to be future sports, and both are virtually unplayable due to finicky controls.

I liked the graphics on both the player and the pitch, but what's the point of looking flash if there is no game to back it up. The computer player is very difficult, and after several hour's play, the best I could do was hold it to a draw. Having to collect the ball, turn, then fire is extremely long-winded and normally results in losing the ball - most infuriating.

Future sports can be good, as proved in Lucasfilms' "Ball Blazer", and I would wait until something like that is released - it's ten times better than this.

SM



Vectorball: a futuristic one-on-one football clone.

CINEMAWARE

PRESENTS

SINBAD

and the Throne of the Falcon

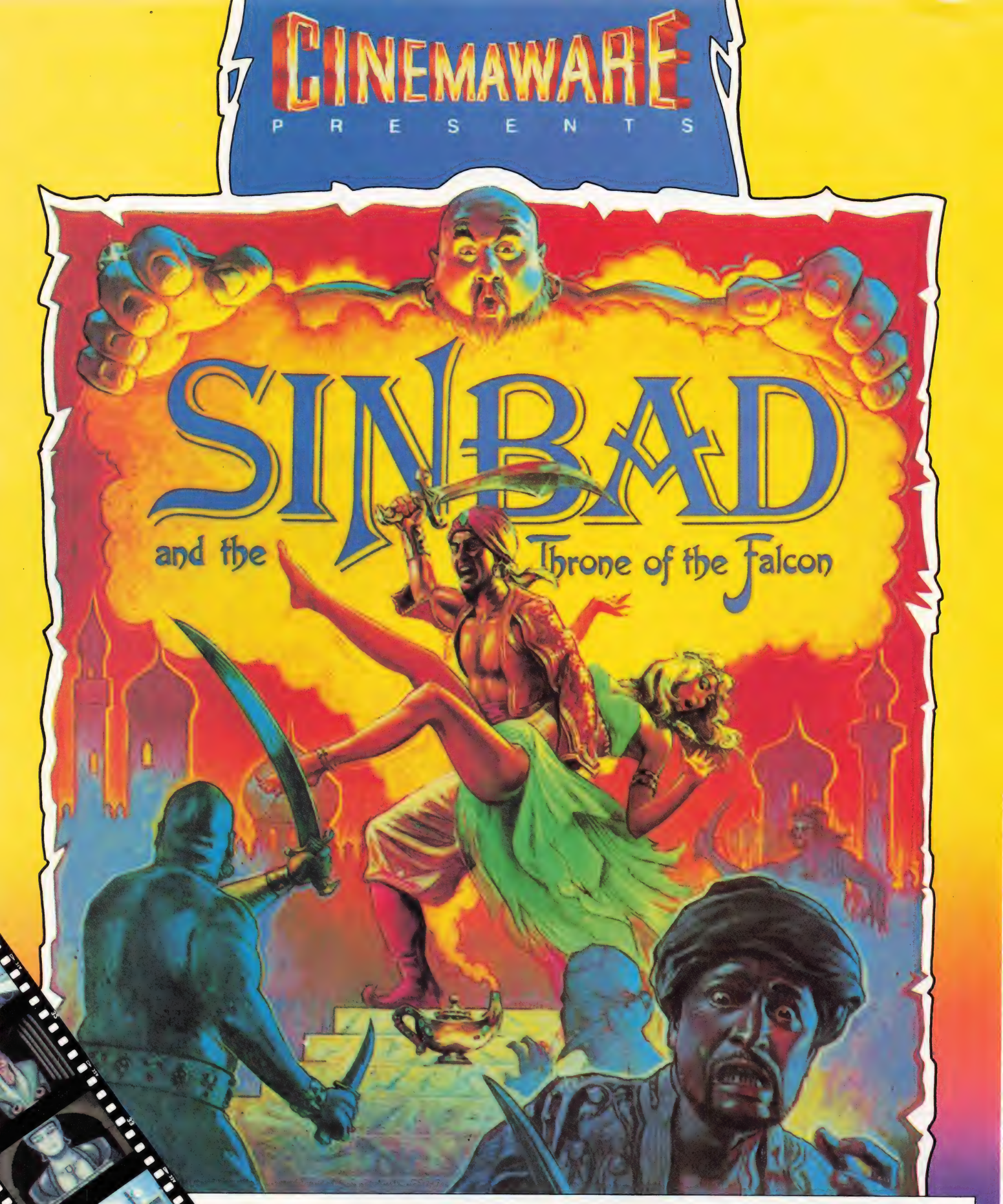


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image works

"Capcom's Street Fighter was notable in the arcades, as it was the only one being thumped for a good reason - hitting it was the control method! But will U.S. Gold have us hitting our keyboards for another reason?"

STREET FIGHTER

CAPCOM (£19.95)

By just looking at the screen-shots on the game's box you may be fooled into believing that Street Fighter is a first rate arcade conversion. Only having bought the game, you would discover that Street Fighter is not so tough as it looks.

Sure enough, the sound and graphics are close to the original coin-op, but the gameplay and animation leave much to be desired. Simply by performing several leg-sweeps it is possible to defeat all but one of your opponents. The sprites themselves are just too jerky. Street Fighter, having been so eagerly awaited, is, unfortunately, nothing more than a below-average beat-em'up.

NC

Street Fighter: nice graphics, shame about the game.

I can sum this up in one word - appalling. This is the most inept conversion I have seen in a long, long while, and the final insult is the twenty-quid price tag.

The graphics are very pretty, but when they move - urrgh! The animation is the ropiest there could have been; the characters lurch from move to move, looking as if they are suffering from epilepsy. Another bugbear is the difficulty level: the game is a total walk-over until you get to the second guy in Thailand - then it gets ridiculously hard. All the characters suffer from "Way of the Exploding Fist" syndrome, i.e. they can all be defeated by the 'leg sweep'.

A waste of time, so hang on to your money.

SM

Playing the part of Ryu, a contender for "Hard man of the year", you must kick, punch and somersault your way across five continents, duffing up two opponents in each. Do so, and you will attain the title of "Well 'ard".

I got myself in the mood by donning my jim-jams and then proceeded to play. Having chosen good old England as my starting level, my character - also wearing night attire - appeared on screen. And what a big chap he is, too - none of your puny sprites here; Ryu is half a screen high! Above his head, at the top of the screen, are both your, and your opponent's, energy bars, and during a fight these will deplete with every hit taken. Also at the top of the screen is a time limit, and if the opponent is not beaten within this, you will lose the bout.

My first opponent appeared in the form of Birdie, the head-butting Punk. Being naive, I leapt straight into the fray - and leapt straight out again, but with only half of my energy! Ever the coward, I tried running away, but Birdie followed relentlessly. Deciding I'd had enough, I attempted leg-sweeping him and kicking him in the boat race, eventually succeeding in knocking him dowm. If you manage to win both bouts - not a hard task - your character raises his arm in a victory salute, and a screen appears with your defeated opponent saying: "What strength!! But don't forget there are many guys like you all over the world." - ominous words indeed.

Each level consists of two opponents who are fought against a scrolling, backstreet scene. On defeating both, a rather silly bonus screen appears which involves Ryu smashing tiles with his bare hands. Your badly animated man has a rapidly increasing and decreasing strength bar above his head, and pressing fire when the bar is high results in all the tiles cracking, and a considerable bonus.

As you progress, some of the fighters start bringing weapons. These range from Eagle's metal poles in England, to the deadly, razor-sharp gloves, as seen in the "Nightmare on Elm Street" films of Geki in Japan - who also does a neat trick of disappearing into thin air! Sadly, these don't really make the opposition any harder to beat, but at least they add variety to the otherwise bland graphics.

Having beaten the eight fighters, you travel to your final destination - Thailand. The first fighter is, again, a push-over, but don't be lulled into a false sense of security, as the final guy, Sagat, is massive. Standing a full screen high, this guy throws fire bolts and delivers a massive kick which rids you of half of your energy. But if you manage to beat him, you will have earned your title as "THE Street Fighter."

STA

STA Rating

43%

GRAPHICS: 47%
SOUND: 55%

LASTING APPEAL: 46%
ADDICTIVENESS: 41%

DIFFICULTY: EASY
1ST DAY SCORE: 296300

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The first and most important task is to select a team of eleven from a list of players in your county club. Information on each player is listed in columns and must be studied and taken into consideration when selecting the team. This information includes whether he is a bowler, batsman, wicket keeper or all-rounder. Additionally, he is given a skill rating from one to nine and another column shows whether he has already been picked for the team, his availability and any injuries. After the team selection, you are given a total rating for the team, which is based on the status of the players and the expected effectiveness of the team as a whole. You cannot have two wicket-keepers in the team and if you have failed to achieve a healthy balance of bowlers and batsmen, this will be indicated in the team rating. Players may be injured during the season and so their skill ratings can fluctuate.

Presuming that you have selected a complete team and it is acceptable, the computer will show you the simulated scores of the other teams competing in the league. The bowling score-card keeps track of overs bowled, runs scored off them, wickets taken and the opposition's score. After the match has run its course, you are given the final results and you must make amendments, such as replacing injured players, and generally re-assess the team based on the analytical information given to you.

I cannot say that I was particularly excited or entertained by Championship Cricket, but it is a highly detailed and interesting insight into the strategies behind cricket. This will appeal to the many fans of the surprisingly successful Football Manager from Addictive. STA

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SUPER HANG ON

MEDIAGENIC (£19.99)

Electric Dreams roared to the finish line and won the rights to convert Sega's latest racing arcade game, Super Hang-on, and so impressed with the game were the Pepsi Suzuki bike racing team, that they have teamed with Electric Dreams for a 'high profile' joint promotion of the game. An option screen enables you to alter the sensitivity of the control over the bike, which increases the likelihood of loosing control and crashing. You have the choice of mouse or joystick control and, with a click of the fire-button or mouse button, a map of the world appears on screen. You follow the bike-racing fraternity across the world in this game, and five races take place over as many continents. As you progress from country to country the races become more keenly contested, with increasingly aggressive contenders, longer races and more hazardous roads. The beginners' level takes place in Africa and is designed to separate the men from the boys. But first you have the choice of four tunes to keep you amused during the race! Who could forget the catchy 'Outride a Chance', or the racy 'Winning Run' - they're certainly better than the dreadful loading theme! I chose the mouse controls for the first race and a message on screen advised me to centralize it. Seven bikes take part in every race, although during the course of the race you pass dozens of riders.

Having been rather disappointed with Sega's Out Run, I was somewhat sceptical about the arrival of their other racing title, Super Hang-On. This time, however, my doubts were completely unfounded. Super Hang-On must be THE definitive motor-racing game. The graphics are clear and concise, with beautiful, dipping and rolling roadways. The sound, too, is very good. Nevertheless I was quite relieved to find the 'no-tune' mode. The availability of both mouse and joystick controls makes play very easy. Super Hang-On is a difficult game to fault. Easily an A1 contender!

NC

The red light turns to green to start the race and the other six bikes roar off into the distance as if you've entered your bike in the wrong formula race. However, pressing the left-hand mouse button activates the throttle and the bike under your control quickly catches up with the pack. As usual, the effect of motion and speed is achieved with stripes on the track and a constant flow of roadside objects. But after driving in countless Outrun clones which have all used this technique, the thought of hundreds of miles of stripey road did not inspire me. It's a race against time and the first section must be completed in 50 seconds in order to qualify for the second stage of the race.

The African roads are long with sweeping bends which can be taken at full speed. With your finger firmly on the accelerator at all times, dragging the mouse to the left or right makes the rider lean around the bend in that incredibly precarious racing position. With his knee grazing the tarmac, both bike and rider

Wind back the throttle and prepare to HANG-ON, as your rider races over the World's continents.

Electric Dreams have proved that they can produce coin-op conversions to rival the best - Super Hang-on is equally as good, if not, better, than U.S. Gold's version of Outrun! The mouse control is responsive and the feeling of motion and speed is terrific, especially the undulation of the road, which has been programmed to give a brilliant visual effect. Initially, the different international venues help to keep your interest, but after a while, Paris and Manhattan seem much the same. A great race game, and no doubt about it.

JS

hurtle around the corner and his fate literally depends on the speed of your reactions. At full tilt, the bike hugs the very edge of the corners and you must be ready to release the throttle if the bike is in danger of leaving the road and crashing. The result of a crash is that both bike and rider end up sprawled across the track and you lose four precious seconds while he remounts. The African race has six stages which are marked by as many check points and as the bike passes through a checkpoint, any time you have left from the previous section is added on to the 30 seconds you are given in the next stage. Should you manage to hang-on until the end of the race your bike is greeted by a posse of local inhabitants, a bonus is awarded for any outstanding time remaining and you are then invited to enter your name onto the high-score chart for posterity.

For a long time now, the ST has sadly lacked a decent racing game - but not any more! A lot of time and effort have gone into this conversion and it really shows. Graphics are smaller than the arcade version, but are crisper and better defined. All of the five tunes are very good too. Controlling the bike with the mouse struck me as a very odd idea but, if anything, it is more sensitive and makes play easier. A brilliant conversion and, above all, a very playable one. Move over, Outrun, the king of the roads is here!

SM

With ten gruelling stages, Asia is reputed to be suitable for the intermediate riders, and after enjoying moderate success with the mouse controls, I decided to try out the joystick. Pushing the joystick forwards increases the throttle, but while it is in that position, it has to be wrenched left and right in order to steer. Admittedly, the Asian track is considerably worse than the African one, but I found the joystick controls quite intolerable after three faltering stages. With a staggering eighteen stages, snaking bends and treacherous roads, the American race is only suitable for 'senior' riders. The race begins with the Manhattan skyline in the background and the road snakes out to the country and across the desert, as you pass checkpoint after checkpoint. With the American marathon behind you, the ultimate race beckons in Europe, and before you have time to change the tyres and apply ointment to saddle sores, the start of the race awaits you in Paris. It is advisable to revert back to mouse control because the twisting and changing roads demand constant throttle adjustment and with eighteen stages through picturesque Europe to ride through, it is far kinder to the hands.

STA

Beware of advertising boards or other roadside objects, and keep on the track, or a free acrobatics lesson will be in order.....HANG-ON!!!

STA Rating

84%

GRAPHICS: 87%
SOUND: 70%

LASTING APPEAL: 82%
ADDICTIVENESS: 82%

DIFFICULTY: AVE-HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 5576372

KEYBOARD		✘
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE	✔	
COLOUR	✔	
MONO		✘
520ST	✔	
1040ST	✔	

"The known is finite the unknown infinite; intellectually we stand on an islet in the midst of a limitless ocean of inexplicability. The size and age of the Universe are beyond our comprehension and our contemplations have only taken us to the shores of the Cosmic Ocean, but the chaps at Firebird have formed their own theory - they call it 'Whirligig'!"

WHIRLIGIG

FIREBIRD (£19.95)

Whirligig is a 'vast network' of 'Eigenspaces' linked together by 'Stargates' and blackholes. Within this huge network are five 'platonic solids', and your task is to break their defences and collect them, thus opening a timegate back to Earth.

With a click of the mouse button, and accompanied by an heroic-sounding theme tune, you leave the sector map screen, and are jettisoned out into space to join your craft. The ship's components clunk together and you gain control of the new craft immediately. The ship flounders in space until you grasp the mouse controls. Acceleration and deceleration are achieved by pushing and pulling the mouse in a straight line, but any divergence to the left or right sends the ship spiralling in the corresponding direction. The ship seems to be caught in a vortex and any loss of control sends it into a spin. Pressing the left-hand mouse button activates your heat-seeking missiles. Warning! If you inadvertently fire the weaponry without an enemy target in range, the rogue missile will spiral inwards until it hits your own craft.

Pressing the 'V' key gives you a 'visual' on the enemy craft that you will soon encounter, and tapping the 'P' key displays those polygon-shaped perfect solids. The nearest solid is a Tetrahedran which can be located in the sixth sector. The furthest solid is a Dodecahedron that is floating around somewhere in sector 33550336. But, thankfully, you can make quantum leaps through millions of sectors if necessary, on a route that takes just 36 sectors. As you view your craft from outside, the physical appearance of the craft changes to inform you of its status. The rockets retract to indicate depleting fuel levels, the cockpit elongates to show diminishing ammunition, and the wings disappear as you spray that life-saving Chaff around.

There's no doubting that Whirligig is a technically impressive game, it's just a pity that the game itself is so repetitive. There may indeed be several million or so screens, but for the most part they are more or less the same. A great disappointment this, and one that does not live up to Firebird's hype.

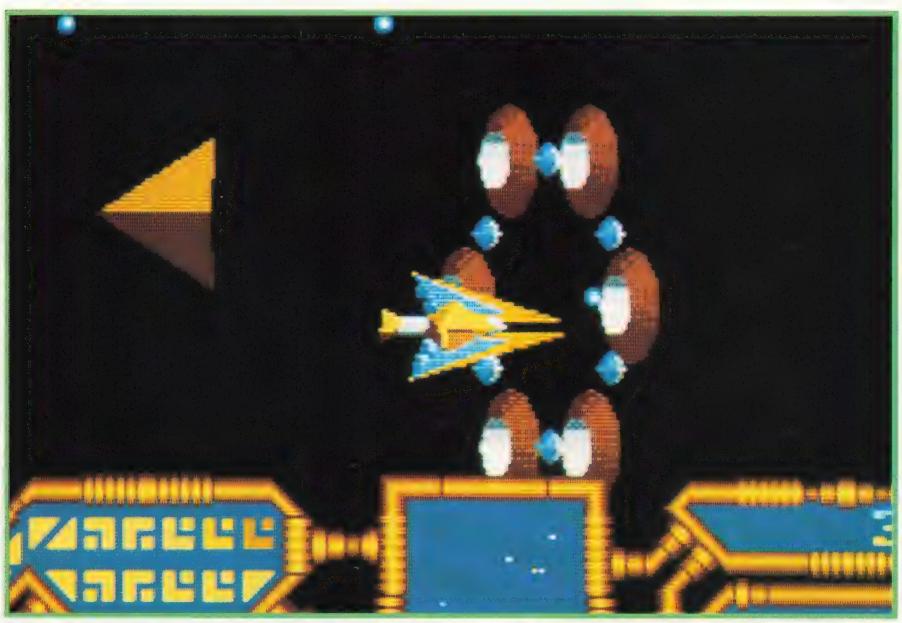
SM

There are more planets in the Cosmos than all the grains of sand on all the beaches on Earth. There aren't quite so many 'Eigenspaces' in Whirligig, but the way Maelstrom have formulated the labyrinthian Whirligig network, you often get the feeling that you are lost in infinite space. This is an original concept and presentation, with remarkable graphics and many unusual surprises - the suicidal, spiralling missiles are a nightmare! Although this is out-of-cockpit action, Whirligig has been designed with the 'Elitists' and 'Mercenaries' in mind.

JS

It is important to check out the positions of the Stargates in your sector because they are the links between the Eigenspaces. However, each Eigenspace has a number of Stargates and as they are 'one-way' routes, it really is a matter of trial and error that can be expensive in fuel and time . A Stargate is indicated by a ring and the craft has to be carefully manoeuvred through the centre. A map of the next sector appears on the screen and pressing the mouse button causes the craft to emerge from the black hole and into the new sector. Each sector has its own timezone and if you revisit during a game, it will be exactly the same as the first time you entered it; therefore, re-entering a sector takes you back to that exact moment in time. Once you have located a

solid you must attach it to the craft and tow it across the sector to the Stargate. The solids are, we are told, capable of 'Existential Discontinuity' and once they leave the sector, they leave it for good. Additionally, as you submerge into a Timegate from one sector to another, any pursuing enemy craft are left behind.



Having retrieved one of your objects, head for the nearest Stargate.

STA

STA Rating

62%

GRAPHICS: 69%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 68%
ADDICTIVENESS: 58%

DIFFICULTY: HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 3150

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Old meets new in the land of the pharohs, in Sublogic's latest flight sim - JET

JET

SUBLOGIC (£39.95)

When a company is renowned and respected for a certain type of software, you can be certain that they know their subject. This is certainly the case for SubLogic and aircraft simulations! However, I have mixed feelings about Jet. Graphically, SubLogic have not made any improvements on the ageing but brilliant Flight Simulator II, which makes the jerky dogfights very reminiscent of Microprose's F15 Strike Eagle. Additionally, for a simulation which professes to be realistic, the take-off, flight and landing procedure is rather uncomplicated and over-simplified. But regardless of these points, this is absorbing entertainment and I particularly like the different views around the aircraft and from the control tower. Come on SubLogic, master smooth graphics, combine them with the many attributes which are already in your simulations, and release a world beater!

JS

Jet was originally designed for the IBM back in 1985 and the ST version is based around that early simulation, with enhanced graphic features and the multi-player computer link-up facility taken from the more recent Flight Simulator II. Jet attempts to simulate the F-16 and F-18 and you are pitted against the equally powerful MiG 21 fighter and MiG 23 Kynda class missile cruiser. There are also many enemy ground targets to attack and some have the ability to return fire. The simulation takes you through the disciplines of free flight without confrontation, multiple air combat and ground target strike. There are four scenarios to choose from which take place over land in the F-16 patrols, and sea with the F-18 which is based on an aircraft carrier. There are nine levels of difficulty which progressively decrease the aircraft's tolerance to pilot error and increase the strength and effectiveness of the enemy. Finally, an armament screen displays the arsenal of missiles at your disposal and taking into account the maximum weight that the aircraft can carry, you can equip her for the mission.

Selecting Dogfight or Combined Attack places you in an immediate confrontation and so it is best to gain basic flight knowledge in safe skies. On choosing the F-16, you are presented with the cockpit with the basic instrumentation housed around the perimeter of the screen to give 'minimum outside viewing interference'. An array of keyboard commands work in conjunction with the instrumentation and as there are no aircraft checks to be made before taking off, pressing the '9' key on the numeric pad lights the pipes and increases the throttle. The throttle increase is indicated on an instrument at the base of the screen and, as the aircraft moves from the hangar, you can steer it to the runway and stop. Then pressing various keys reveals different views from the back and sides of the plane, a feature which is useful when you are attacked in mid flight. Additionally, pressing the 'C' shows the F-16 and runway as viewed from the control tower.

Increasing the throttle to full capacity sends the jet accelerating down the runway, and pulling back on the joystick achieves a very simplified take-off. However, as the aircraft leaves the runway, checking out those other views gives a terrific effect - you can even see the jet climbing into the sky from the control tower whilst pressing F9 zooms in like a pair of binoculars. It takes time to become accustomed to the jerky flight controls and you soon discover that far more control can be gained with slight and smooth

I was the last resort when it came to reviewing this, as I am about as good at flight sims as bricks are at table tennis. Still, I gave my best, and I must admit to quite enjoying myself. The screen update is jerky compared to something like Gunship, but the game seems slightly easier to get into. A bonus also, is the fact that you can take control during the demo - very useful for someone as useless at taking off as me!

I had quite a laugh with this, especially during the dog-fights. And with the wealth of options, views and tactics available, I think it will appeal to people who are interested in flight sims but have never given them a go, as well as old fans of the genre.

SM

Here you are closing in on your Primary target, select weapons .....and let'em have it!

adjustments. With five minutes flying time in safe skies under your belt, you are fully prepared to face the wrath of the MiGs.

Staying on dry land with the F-16s, selecting 'Combined Attack' places you in a desolate and mountainous terrain. The take-off procedure is the same and the jet soars into more hostile skies over enemy ground targets, which are enthusiastically protected by keen MiG forces. The best tactic is to avoid an immediate confrontation by climbing to a high altitude and circling in safe skies. But the rate of climb must be monitored carefully otherwise the computer will inform you that you have blacked out from excessive G force. Pressing F3 calls up a radar map on screen which pinpoints the ground targets and enemy fighters, and pressing the Return key changes your weaponry to bomb mode in preparation for the assault. When ready, pushing forward on the joystick sends the jet into a nose-dive and the altimeter and digital readout must be carefully monitored as terra firma gets closer and detail of the terrain becomes bigger and clearer. Immediately the ground bases are recognizable, a secondary weaponry sight locks on to the target and you must centre the building in your primary gunsight; pressing the firebutton releases the bomb. Pulling back on the joystick brings the jet out of the dive and as you pull away from the surprised MiGs, pressing the 'A' key shows a missile's-eye view as it hurtles towards the target.

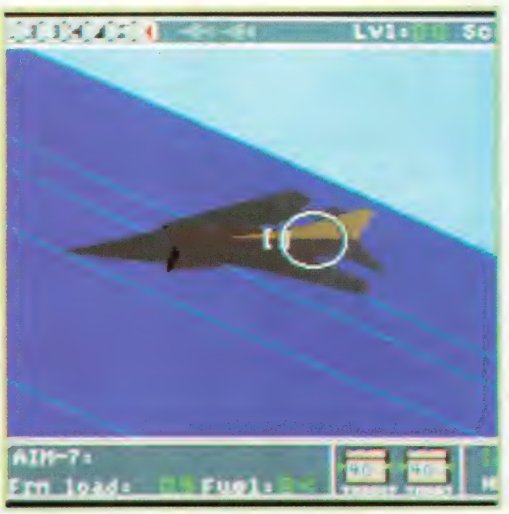
KEYBOARD	✔	
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE	✔	
COLOUR	✔	
MONO	✔	
520ST	✔	
1040ST	✔	

In retaliation, the MiGs make chase and pressing the Shift and '9' key ekes out that last burst of power from the pipes. Now you can go vertical, loop, and come down behind the MiGs. Secondary gunsights pinpoint the MiGs against the sky and pressing Return selects the most effective weaponry for a dogfight - AIM-9 AIM-7 and M61 are recommended. The scrolling is not particularly smooth and this is emphasized during the dogfight as the aircraft draws jerkily nearer. This causes difficulties when trying to centre the sights on a target! Providing that you have sufficient fuel and weaponry and have successfully eluded or eliminated the MiGs, you can return to deal another blow on the enemy bases.

I felt a shade disappointed with this game. It promised a lot but then failed to deliver the goods in a lot of areas. The in-flight characteristics are quite good, but are badly let down by poor input interpretation - I was frequently in the positon to shoot a MiG-23 when the computer refused to recognise my trigger input, only for me to complete the manoeuvre, such as, a high-g barrel roll, and then a stream of bullets to issue forth from my gun - most frustrating. The game played fairly well and I was often burning the midnight oil - not just playing the game, but also trying to master the difficult controls. Overall then, Jet has a lot of rough edges and cannot really be recommended.

MM

For the next mission, I chose to pilot the considerably larger F-18, which is based on an aircraft carrier. The take-off procedure is similar to the land-based F16. After increasing the throttle, pressing the Shift and 'L' key launches you from the catapult and as the jet nears the edge of the carrier, pulling back on the joystick takes it miraculously into the air. The MiG attack is as formidable as the terrain scenarios, but the ground bases are replaced by enemy naval craft.



STA

STA Rating

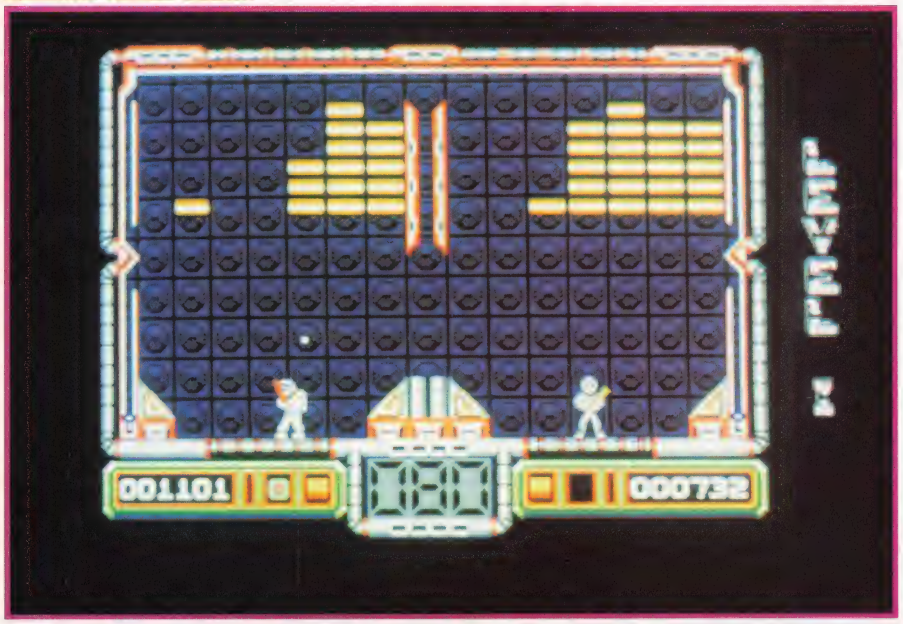
64%

GRAPHICS: 54%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 66%
ADDICTIVENESS: 68%

DIFFICULTY:AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE:18500

Hot Shot is an interesting variation on the Breakout theme, apparently played with your mum's household Vacuum Cleaner.



HOT SHOT

PRISM-ADDICTIVE (£19.95)

"They call it, 'Hotshot, a futuristic sport'. This 'game of the future' dispenses with footer boots, bats and rackets and introduces such unlikely equipment as Graviton Guns and Plasma Balls - all sounds a bit uncomfortable!"

Hotshot is an unusual combination of a 'futuristic sport' with variations on the Pinball and Breakout themes. Two players can participate in the game, or you can compete against a strange selection of computer-controlled opponents. The game has five levels in all, with a bonus screen awarded to the victor of the first bout. There is a rather tricky introduction to the game which is made more difficult by the extraordinary controls. If you are playing solo, your 'Hotshotter' and a weird computer-generated player appear at the base of the screen. The 'arena' is split in two and at the top, each player has a wall of bricks which he must demolish 'Breakout-style' in order to gain points. Additionally, Pinball flippers have been strategically placed around the screen to help the Plasma Ball on its journey.

Pressing the firebutton puts the ball into play and the computer-governed opponent is usually the first to intercept it. The ball will continue to bounce off the wall and the opposition will try and keep possession for as long as possible. Thankfully, the droid opponent is quite fallible and so you occasionally gain possession of the play. If the ball bounces off at a wild tangent, the chances are it will continue through the gap in the middle of the game-screen and into your half of the arena. As mentioned, the joystick controls are quite unusual, which causes many problems. As the ball ricochets from the bricks, your player must be manoeuvred directly beneath it and wrenching the joystick upwards, positions the barrel of the Graviton Gun ready to catch it.

Pressing the firebutton activates a magnet within the gun which attracts the ball and, once it is adhered to the barrel, you have a few seconds to put it back into play before it explodes, taking your player with it. The joystick controls the Graviton Gun and you must quickly point the barrel in the desired direction and release the firebutton to send the ball crashing against the bricks. Plasma is a volatile substance and so it is crucial that you catch the ball on the rebound, as the slightest contact decapitates your player. An excellent technique to keep possession of the ball, is to send it up a chute at the side of the screen, which leads to the top of the bricks. There it will bounce, accumulating points until it finds a gap to drop through. After the bonus screen, which is a simple 'bagatelle' set-up specifically designed for hungry point-getters, level two re-introduces the brick-busting and pinball combination. Here you have limited lives but no time limit and so you can destroy the entire wall in your own time for maximum points.

Ensuing levels introduce a variety of hazards and point-scoring features and level four adds a devious method of sabotage! Rebounding the ball off a yellow bumper switches on an electric current which electrocutes your opponent. To turn off the current, the bumper has to be hit again, which transfers the current to the opposition. Survive this 'electrocuting' round and you are promoted to the grand finale, where each half of the arena is slowly being sucked into black holes - great fun! **STA**

Take the basic formula of a pinball machine, add a couple of robots for the story-line, mix in a large dollop of "Breakout" and its clones and what do you get? Hot Shot. Addictive seem to have taken all of the best points of the aforementioned ingredients and served up quite a playable game. Control of your character couldn't be simpler, yet the game still managed to infuriate me, but kept me coming back for more. A good idea for a game and one that could have been a lot better with a bit more thought put into the game-play.

SM

Full marks must be given to Prism Leisure for dreaming up this quite extraordinary and original game. Hotshot combines the addictive properties of two great arcade pursuits, Breakout and Pinball, with the sporting competitiveness of simultaneous, two-player participation. However, the unique controls are very unforgiving and quite irritating to the beginner, and they will test the resolve of the most ardent game-player. But with perseverance, a certain amount of enjoyment can be gained from this hybrid game.

JS

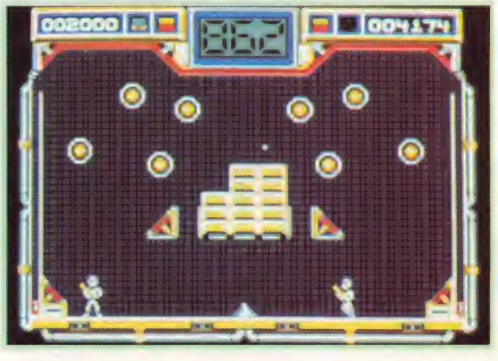
STA Rating

54%

GRAPHICS: 49%
SOUND: 43%

LASTING APPEAL: 53%
ADDICTIVENESS: 47%

DIFFICULTY: AVE
1ST DAY SCORE: 32000



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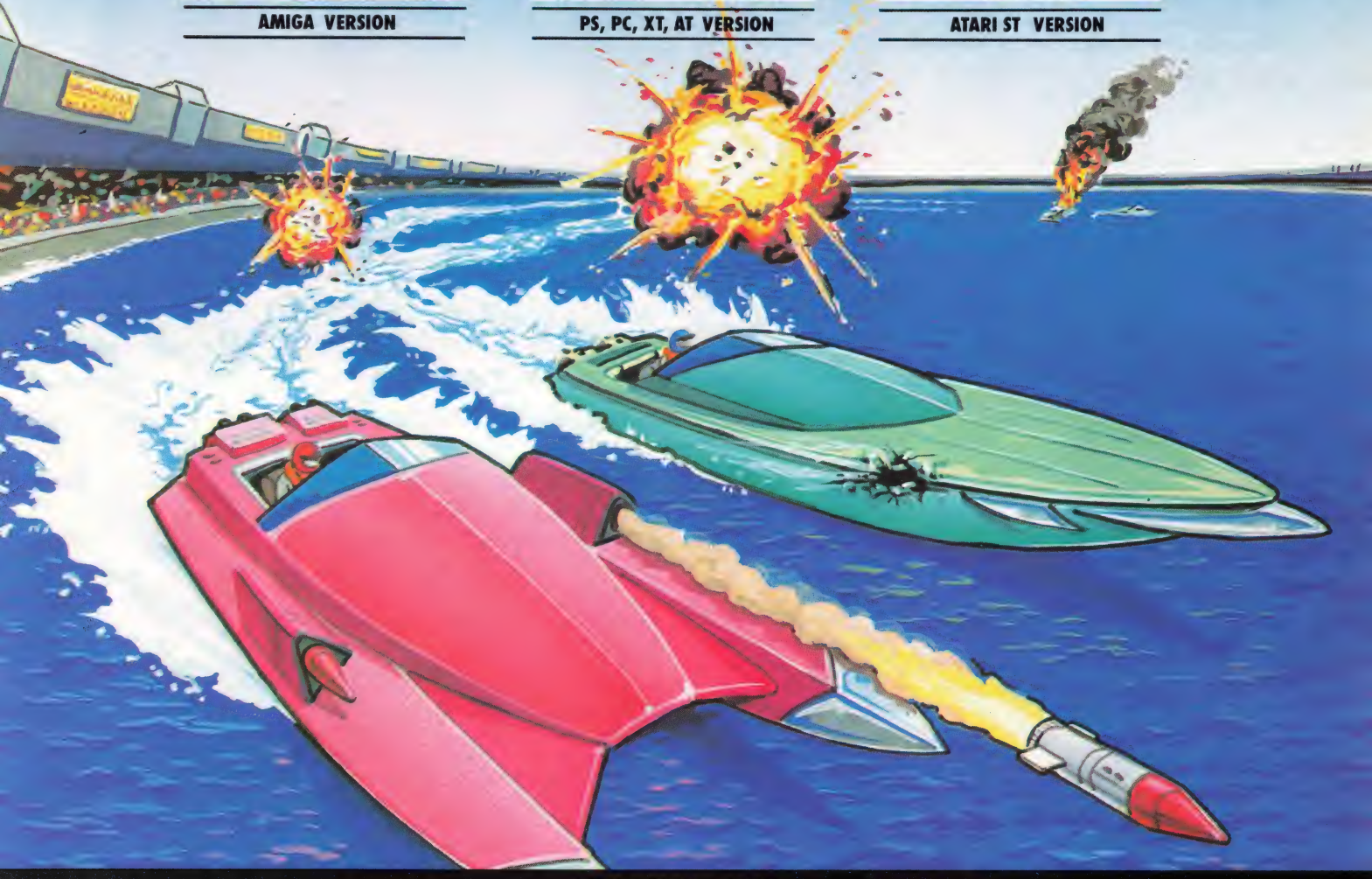

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"An entire generation of arcade frequenters were endowed with immense strength in their forearms, due to their addiction to the highly popular athletics game, Decathlon. These Popeye-like muscles were developed through vigorous left and right joystick manipulation which sent an endearing little athlete belting down a track or soaring over a vaulting horse. Now ST owners have a chance to wreck their joystick with Summer Olympiad 88."

SUMMER OLYMPIAD

TYNESOFT (£19.95)

WARNING! Consult your GP and joystick manufacturer before playing Tynesoft's Summer Olympiad 88 - you may not be as fit as you were! Up to six armchair athletes can participate in the games and the first task is to register the names and nationalities. Requiring a keen eye, judgement and nerves of steel, the opening event is Skeet or clay pigeon shooting. Skeet is just one of thirteen shooting events in the Olympics and, uniquely, the competition is open to both men and women. Armed with shotguns, each competitor is dealt an equal barrage of small clay discs, which are jettisoned by clay traps in a variety of formations, directions and speeds. There are seven individual shooting points between two traps and the competitor must anticipate the clays at a different time, angle and height. The Skeet shooting screen shows the marksman standing in the centre with his back to the screen looking out across the firing range.

With joystick or mouse controls, you move the gunsight around the screen and activate the trigger with firebutton or mouse button. In this particular discipline, the free action of the mouse quickly proves to be the most favourable control. Clicking the left-hand mouse button launches the clay or clays into the air, and before they travel out of range, the player must position the gunsight directly over the flying disc and press the firebutton. The marksman's gun is directly linked to the mouse movement, and placing the sight to the left and right, scrolls the screen. The clays are jettisoned in singles and doubles, towards and away from the marksman - the variety is quite foxing!

With a hop, step and jump, we move from the firing range and into the stadium for the Triple Jump competion.

Hop, Skip and Jump your way through Summer Olympiad's five events.

The athlete is positioned at the start of the run-up track, which leads off screen at a thirty-degree angle. Decathlon-style left and right joystick manipulation sends the athlete running down the track, and when you have achieved maximum speed, which is indicated on a sliding gauge, pressing the firebutton freezes the speed and changes the joystick control from running speed to approach and jump angle. As the athlete hits the take-off board, pressing the firebutton makes him jump, and using up and down joystick movements controls the arc of his flight for maximum length. He steps as his foot touches the ground and then the procedure must be repeated for the final jump.

The ancient and honourable sport of fencing takes us inside for the next leg

With the 1988 Seoul Olympic games all but over, you may have thought that was it for another four years. But, just when it was safe to return to your monitor, Tynesoft have released the Summer Olympiad.

With the success of the Winter edition, Tynesoft now tempt all us would-be Daley Thompsons with five new, more seasonal, events. Each game is well depicted and accompanied with the obligatory sound effects. The diving and hurdles events stand out the most. The diving because of the wonderful way in which it is represented, and the hurdles because of the socket-wrenching joystick-wriggling needed to win a gold medal.

Summer Olympiad is undoubtedly one of the best games in its class, but, for me, it is ultimately forgettable.

NC

STA Rating 72%

GRAPHICS: 81%
SOUND: 62%

LASTING APPEAL: 68%
ADDICTIVENESS: 71%

DIFFICULTY: AVE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

of the competition. Pierced gizzards and duelling scars are a thing of the past and the two competitors on screen are fully protected from head to toe. Each swordsman is linked to a computer which indicates when a competitor sustains a hit and the score accumulates automatically. Five hits are required to win a bout and move on to the next round. 'Riposte, lunge, parry, thrust and riposte again you scoundrel!' Manipulating the joystick up and down moves him forwards and backwards, with left to parry, right to riposte, and pressing the firebutton makes him lunge - the action is a bit cut and thrust. Three sets must be fought and the final score is assessed on style, performance and the amount of time it took to eliminate the other competitors.

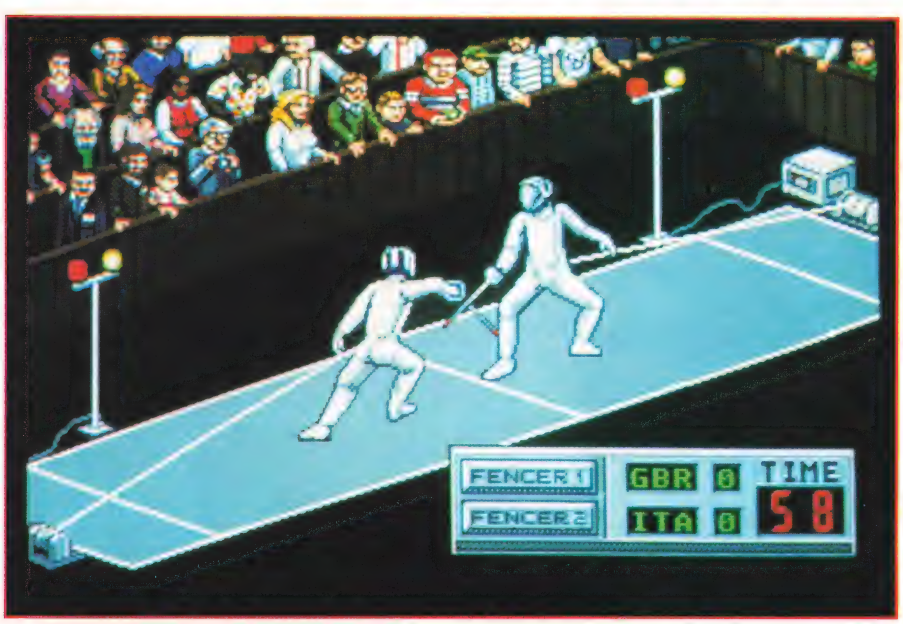
KEYBOARD		✘
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE	✔	
COLOUR	✔	
MONO		✘
520ST	✔	
1040ST	✔	

The next event takes us out to the pool for the high-board diving competition. The game screen is split into two, showing a close-up of the diver on the board in the main picture and the drop to the pool in the other. The close up allows you to concentrate on the style of the dive, while the other monitors the distance to the water. As soon as the diver springs from the board, his actions are in your hands. Pulling back on the joystick puts him into the tuck position and pushing to the left or right makes him somersault in the corresponding direction. The number of somersaults you achieve before the diver hits the water adds to your score, but entering the water cleanly is most important. As the diver nears the water, pushing the joystick upwards untucks his body and the aim is to make him enter the water as near 90 degrees as possible.

The final event is an all-out, Decathlon-style joystick destroyer - the 100 meters hurdles. The screen shows the backs of the runners who are facing down the track, and pressing the firebutton twice starts the race and sets your athlete running. Rhythm is all-important in hurdles and Tynesoft's interpretation requires rapid left and right joystick manipulation, with firebutton presses to leap the hurdles. STA

The graphical presentation of this game is equally as impressive as Winter Olympiad 88, and I admire Tynesoft's courage to tackle some of the more unusual sports, such as, Fencing and Diving. The Skeet shooting is particularly enjoyable, although the fencing is a bit 'hit-and-miss' and the triple jump has limited appeal. However, the Diving competition is the best interpretation I have played and the Hurdles is all-out, hand-blistering, joystick-wrecking action. As usual in sport games, the best results are achieved with multiple-player participation.

JS



A swift Parry Reposte counter attacks your opponent's ill-timed lunge.

I was vey disappointed with Tynesoft's Winter Olympiad, so I wasn't expecting huge things from this.

All the events are graphically attractive, and the music throughout is some of the best I've heard. In fact, if a game sold on those two points alone, this would outsell Out Run. But the biggest problem is that there are too few events, and of the six there are, only half are really playable.

A game that may tide over fans awaiting the next in Epyx's 'games' series, but really, there are not enough events to encourage me to part with twenty quid.

SM

SPACE HARRIER COMPETITION

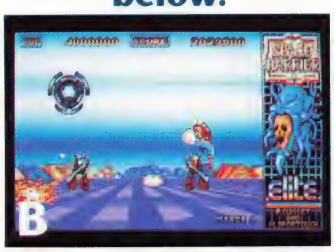
To promote their latest smash arcade game, Space Harrier, Elite are offering the trip of a lifetime for SIX of you. The prize consists of an all-expenses paid day out to Shugborough Hall, home of Lord Lichfield, near Birmingham, where you will go for a flight in a hot air balloon! The trip will last in the region of an hour and will have you floating through the air so quietly, you'll have nothing but the birds and clouds for company. Hot air ballooning is an expensive sport these days, so it is one of those things that most people would love to do, but will never really get round to doing. NOW'S YOUR CHANCE. As well as winning a trip in a balloon, the six winners will each receive Elite T-shirts and a copy of Space Harrier. For 20 runners-up, there are prizes of an Elite T-shirt and copy of Space Harrier to keep you busy and looking cool. All you have to do to stand a chance of winning one of these wonderful prizes is answer the questions below and post them to us at the usual ST Action address to reach us by the 10th October 1988.

1 - Rearrange these letters to form the titles of well-known Elite games

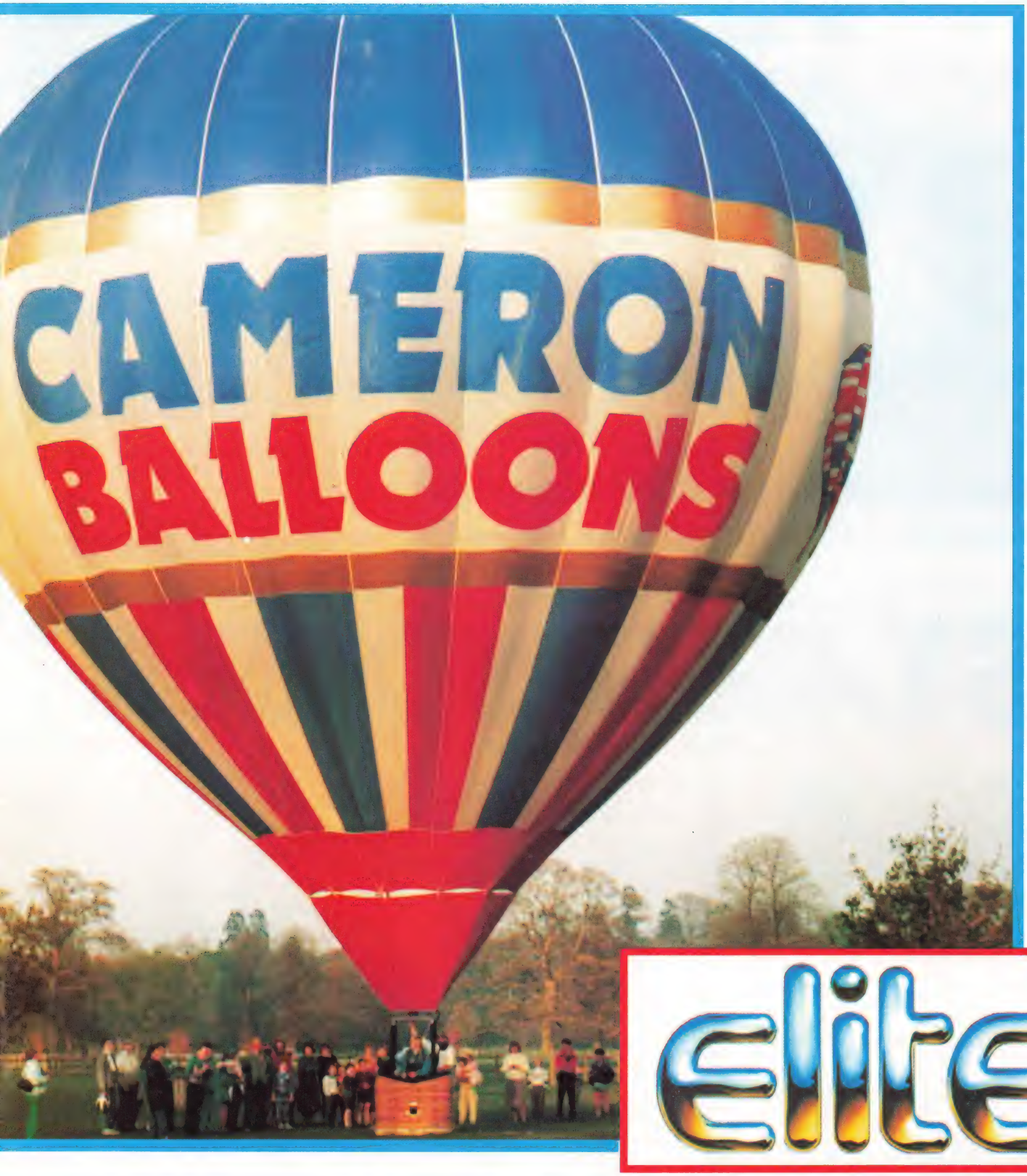
a) GUY GOBBY
b) OVEN LARDER
c) CARRI A SPHERE

2 - The theory of hot air ballooning works on which principle?
a) Hot air is denser than cold air
b) Hot air is lighter than cold air
c) Helium is lighter than air

3 - Pick the title of the game that corresponds to the screen shots below.



Bombjack / Buggy Boy / Space Harrier



ANSWER TO QUESTION 1:

A .....

B .....

C .....

ANSWER TO QUESTION 2 : .....

ANSWER TO QUESTION 3:

SCREEN A .....

SCREEN B .....

SCREEN C .....

Name ....

Address ....

..... Post code ..... Daytime phone no .....

ST Action Competition Rules:
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Send entry to:
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Still as smooth as the original, Starglider II boasts solid 3D images. Here, the Icarus skims across one of the many planet complexes.

It is a long time since I have become so involved in a game - you don't just play Starglider 2 - you experience it! To draw an analogy, 'movie-going' can either be a way of killing a few hours, or an absorbing, captivating and involving experience. I am constantly surprised at the progress made in graphics and sound, but Jez Sans and his team have created a masterpiece and set another standard. A colleague who had only played the game for a short time said: 'Okay, the graphics are great, but what do you actually do in the game?' Simple, you persevere for a while and get the feel of the game, marvel at the incredible graphics, the feeling of flight and speed and enjoy a damn good shoot'em-up. Finally, like that rare movie experience, you become involved!

JS

"When Starglider hit ST owners' screens nearly two years ago, it became an instant classic. Will Argonaut Software's sequel have the same effect?"

STARGLIDER II

RAINBIRD (£24.95)

The Imperial Prator, an evil despot and ruler of Egron: 'This time there will be no mistake - this time we will crush Novenia!' Embittered by their ignominious defeat, the Egrons have drawn up new plans and the full might of their awesome force is descending into the Solice system. Egron scientists have designed a massive projector beam which is aimed at Novenia - and it's not for showing Egron movies either! This megalomaniacal race must be annihilated once and for all and the destructive beam deactivated. But much has changed in Novenia and you might not recognize the place. With the sacrifice of certain attractive but superficial aspects of the original game, Jez Sans has channelled all available memory into redesigning the entire Solice System. Gone are the dark skies, the rush of lights, the pallid vector-graphics employed to create the feeling of swift and smooth flight; now, solid, filled-in and shaded 3D graphics add a feeling of substance, without the loss of the smooth scrolling.

The first sign of great sacrifice is the exclusion of the memory-gulping theme tune which accompanied the original, and silently, an option-screen offers a choice of mouse or joystick control. After making your selection, you are unceremoniously jettisoned straight onto the planet surface and into the thick of the action. Again, you are piloting the Novenian craft, Icarus, which is plummeting uncontrollably towards the planet surface. Grasping the mouse (the most favoured form of control in this game) and drawing back, takes Icarus out of the dive. Detail of the swiftly approaching terrain is now clearly visible, as a two-legged land vehicle stomps across the land. Taking Icarus down to ground level, the awesome Walker strides closer, its giant footsteps now audible, and with the right-hand button depressed, pushing the mouse forward sends Icarus hurtling towards it. Centering the cross-hair weaponry sights on this strange vehicle and clicking the left-hand button sends a volley of yellow laser fire into the Walker's legs and it shatters into pieces of shrapnel. In a bid to avoid the explosion, pulling back on the mouse sends Icarus into a rapid ascent and, circling above, you can see the remains of the Walker, other vehicles on the terrain, and the shadows of craft flying above.

Suddenly, the sky is illuminated with shell-fire and the eerie shadows of the enemy craft drift across the terrain. Bringing the nose of the Icarus up further, holding down the right button and pushing

KEYBOARD	✔	
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE	✔	
COLOUR	✔	
MONO		✘
520ST	✔	
1040ST	✔	

The Icarus is not indestructable, avoid ground instalations at all costs.

STA Rating 77%

GRAPHICS: 80%
SOUND: 53%

LASTING APPEAL: 78%
ADDICTIVENESS: 81%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 1600

It was with baited breath that I awaited this classic sequel. Upon first inspection, Starglider II seemed nothing more than a spectacular out-of-the-cockpit shoot'em-up. However, after closely reading the manual and familiarizing myself with the craft's controls, I soon became aware of the game's real value.

Starglider II ranks easily along side it's predecessor, and the likes of Elite. The combination of space-battles, exploration and inter-stellar travel, all give help give Starglider II a positive feel. While not instantly visible, Starglider II is an excellent game which will provide anyone with hours of absorbing entertainment.

NC

the mouse forward sharply takes you out of the stratosphere and into space. This momentary sanctuary enables you to check out the instrumentation, which comprises an unusual interpretation of convention aircraft instrumentation, such as, an Artificial Horizon and a standard 360 degree Compass. Remarkably, the various planets in the Solice System can be seen through the cockpit window from this position - five planets in all and a number of orbiting moons which can be identified by the descriptions in the accompanying pilot manual. An example is 'Apogee', the principal planet of the Solice system: colour, grey; two moons, 'Enos' and 'Castron'; average gravity and completely dominated by the Egrons. Once a thriving independent planet, the Egrons use Apogee as a major political and economic base - an excellent target for a primary attack.

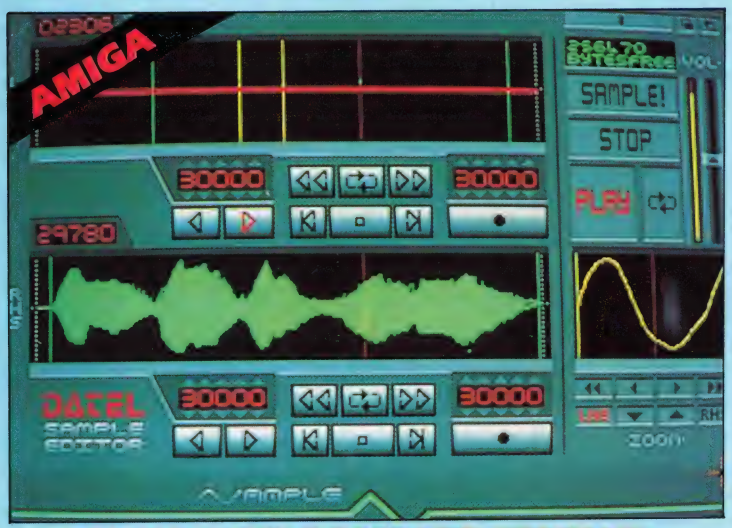
Apogee looms large through the cockpit windshield and pressing the 'D' key puts Icarus into 'Stardrive'. With a swirling of stars, the craft speeds through space towards Apogee and, as the planet draws closer, it is time to de-activate Stardrive. Apogee is all wasteland, but its largest moon, Castron, is covered with Egron industrialization and abundant with facilities for refuelling Icarus. There are a number of methods for re-fuelling, the most common being the powerline which replenishes the main-drive, energy shields and laser power. These powerlines run between pylons across the terrain and refuelling is achieved by manoeuvring Icarus between the pylons to absorb the powerline. This is the simplest form of refuelling, but by far the most hazardous technique is to fly close to the sun and absorb the energy - get to close and Icarus could live up to its name by melting before your eyes.

A lull in the action enables you to look out from different angles of Icarus by tapping various keys on the numeric pad. But suddenly, before you can leave the volatile Apogee area, a warning of an imminent Egron attack appears on screen - the Local Area Scanner confirms the report and tiny red spots can be seen emerging from the planet. Centering on the nearest approaching target, effective firing can commence as soon as you can make out the shape of the craft. Dozens of craft approach Icarus and, again, the sky lights up with shell-fire. Centering the sights on a vehicle and tapping the 'I' key identifies it, enabling you to assess whether it is potentially dangerous before wasting precious weaponry. But your craft can only sustain so much and a fearful message: 'Icarus destroyed', is followed by an horrific animation sequence of your last moments before the craft blows to bits. **STA**

I suppose that after the constant hyping of Starglider II, I was bound to be disappointed by the final product. The time and effort that must have gone into this is incredible - with nice ideas and some excellent animation - but sadly I found the game boring to play. It will probably sell to all the staunch fans of the original, but I don't think it will have as much impact as its predecessor.

SM

DATEL ELECTRONICS



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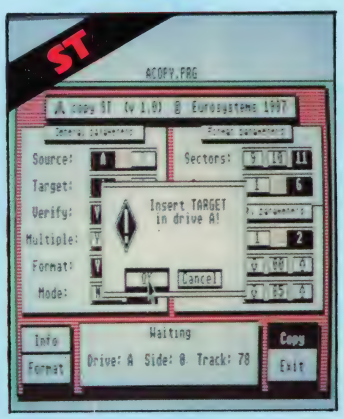

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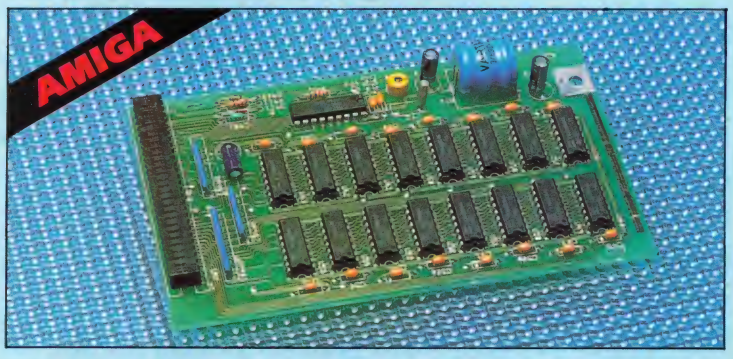

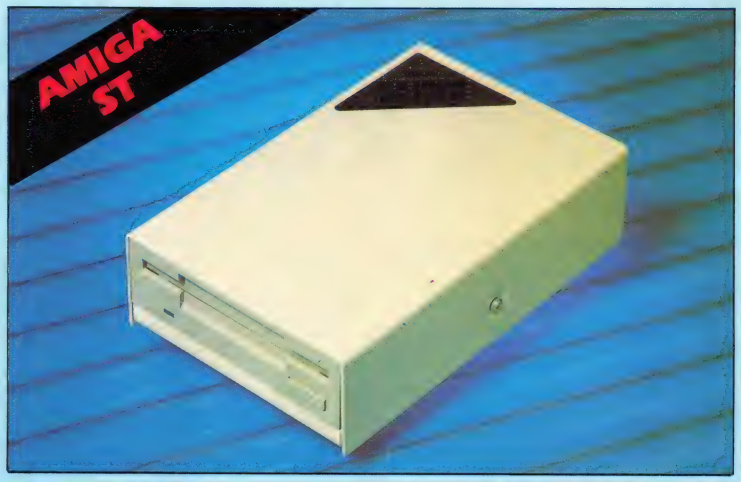

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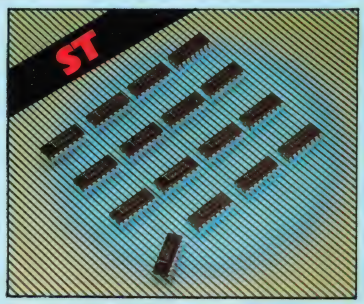

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"Star Wars is both a classic film and a classic computer game. Now, after what seems an eternity, Domark release its sequel. Will it be as big a hit as the original?"

EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

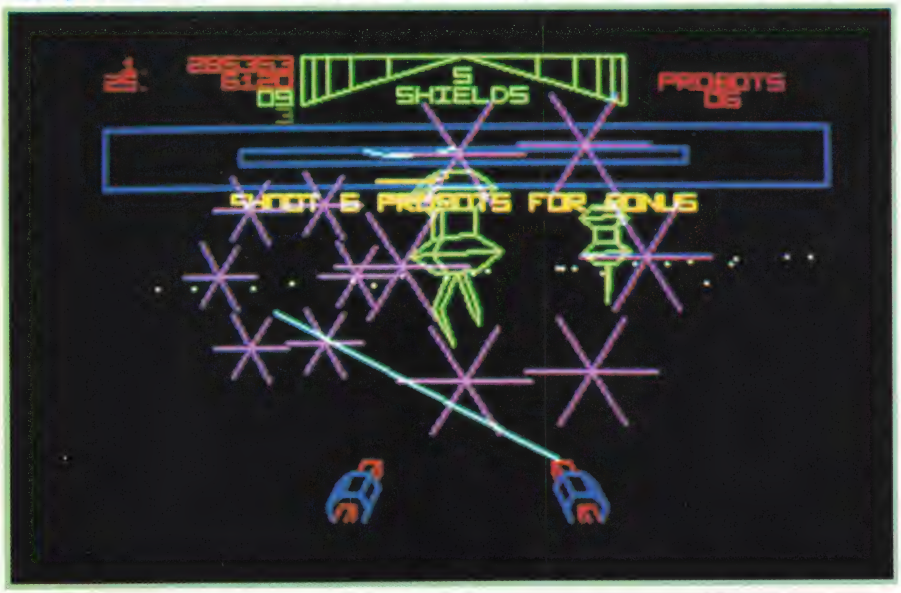
DOMARK (£19.99)

Narrowly escaping destruction from the exploding Death Star, in the forerunner, Star Wars, the dark lord, Darth Vader, spins uncontrollably, until he is rescued by a passing Empire cruiser. Vowing to destroy the rebel force, he puts out a huge reward to anyone who can locate the rebel base. All radio frequencies are monitored and spy robots are sent to random planets, searching for outposts.

The game is split into four parts, each rigidly adhering to the film's plot. After choosing your difficulty level, or having looked through the very nice rebel manual which allows you to practise each level, you watch as the cursed Lord Vader's ship - the Executor - glides past, searching for the rebels.

Control is via either joystick or mouse, though the latter is the more responsive and easier to use. Having chosen, you begin the first section which is set on the ice world Hoth. You control Luke Skywalker in his snow speeder as he tries to destroy the Empire's spy robots. These biped robots, on receiving rebel transmissions, will beam them to the awaiting Empire, so it is of paramount importance that you blow them up. Guiding your cross-hair cursor you must line them up in your sights and press fire. Doing so causes them to explode - ending any chance of them telling tales. A bonus is awarded for shooting a set number of these, and a letter of the word Jedi is released and floats to the top right of the screen. On each level, should you destroy the allotted amount, another letter is released. Collect the entire word, and you receive true Jedi force - also known as temporary immunity. The robots are not unarmed though, and release fireballs which, on contact, remove one of your five shields. If Luke completes this level, he must rush back to the rebel's base, ready for the next attack wave.

Zapping the Imperial Probebots is only one of the tasks as you attempt to thwart Lord Vader's plans



KEYBOARD		✘
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE	✔	
COLOUR	✔	
MONO		✘
520ST	✔	
1040ST	✔	

The next stage is the most graphically impressive, and highlights the attack of the Empire's walking AT-ATs and the smaller AT-STs. The animation on these is incredible, with the massive AT-AT's heads waving from side to side searching for the rebel camp. The smaller AT-STs move considerably faster, so killing these first is a priority. Both types of walker have only two vulnerable points: an exhaust point, which, with a well-placed shot, will cause it to explode, or their legs which can be shot at using thick tow ropes.

The latter action is limited by the amount of tow ropes on board, and is slightly riskier, but definitely worth it - if only to see the mighty beasts topple and explode. After the attacking force has been repelled, the rebel base's

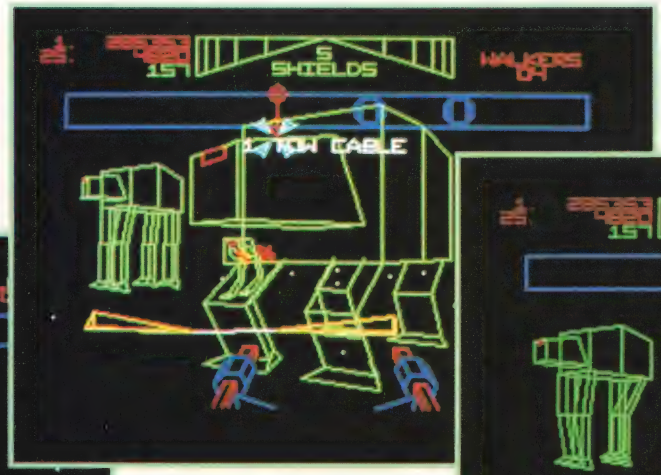
Empire Strikes Back was a very rare coin-op, and one I have never seen. This, perhaps, is to this conversion's favour, as I have nothing to judge it by.

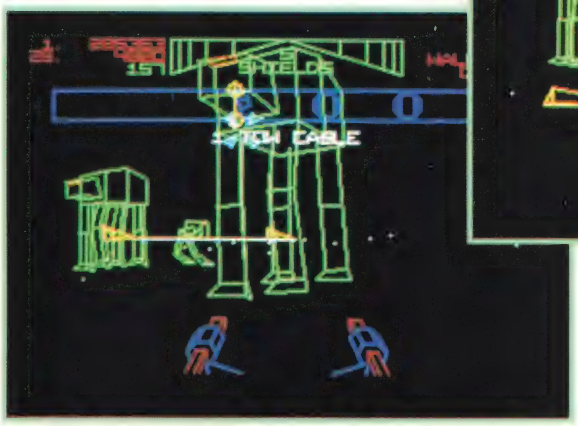
Vektor Grafix have made a fantastic job of the graphics, with some particularly appealing touches - I loved the way the heads swayed on the AT-ATs. The game plays at quite a rate, but the graphics do not get juddery or slow down, and this is remarkable when you consider how many things you get on the screen at once.

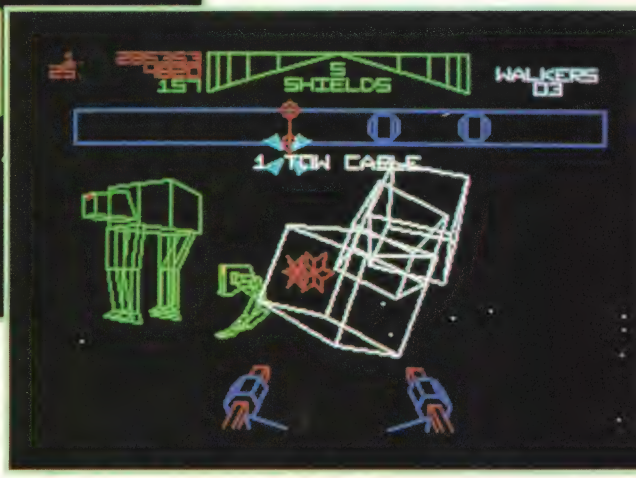
I like this a lot, but I feel that it may not have a great deal of lasting appeal - but then again, I felt that about the original, and I'm still playing that!

SM

Marching menacingly towards the rebel base, the AT-AT walkers need immediate attention. Either a well placed shot between the eyes, or a strategically thrown cable, will stop them. Flying low and fast, position yourself close to the AT-ATs vurnerable area. Release the tow cable and watch as it wraps itself around the enemy vehicles' legs, causing it to fall to the snowy wastes.







entrance can be seen as Luke's snow speeder flies towards its entrance.

Leaving Luke on Hoth, the player now takes control of Han Solo in his Millenium Falcon. "I want that SHIP, not excuses." growls Vader, as you begin this level. This stage is quite similar to the first level of Star Wars, and involves shooting the screaming hordes of attacking TIE fighters. These weave about, protecting Vader's Executor, releasing fireballs. Having shot the required amount - which is very easy - access to the asteroid field is gained.

This is the weakest part of the whole game, and one I feel should have been replaced by a more exciting section. You must dodge the constant barrage of asteroids, all of which are immune to your laser fire, keeping well clear in case they remove one of your valuable shields. Completion of this level sees the Falcon skating past the Exexcutor which means the rebels are safe. Having done this, you will return to Hoth where you must, once again, go through the levels which are now considerably harder, with more ships needed to be shot before you can attain the force again. **STA**

STA Rating

75%

GRAPHICS: 76%
SOUND: 70%

LASTING APPEAL: 74%
ADDICTIVENESS: 74%

DIFFICULTY: AVE
1ST DAY SCORE: 250629

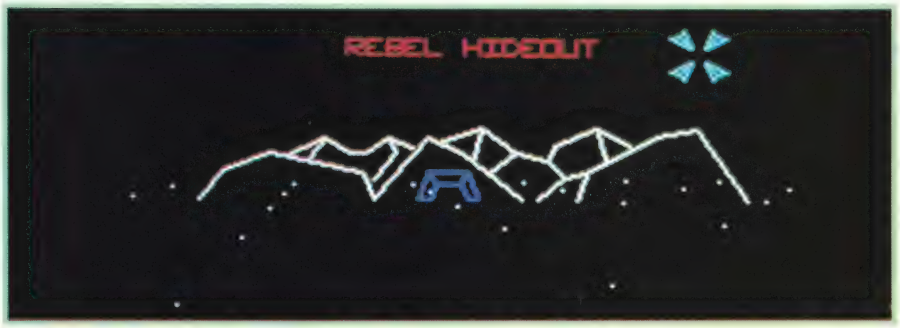
I never actually saw the arcade version of this game. However, having seen the film several times, I was quite well up on the storyline. Having played Star Wars, I found this game something of a let down at first, but after a few hours play, it soon became obvious that Vektor Grafix had produced yet another cracker.

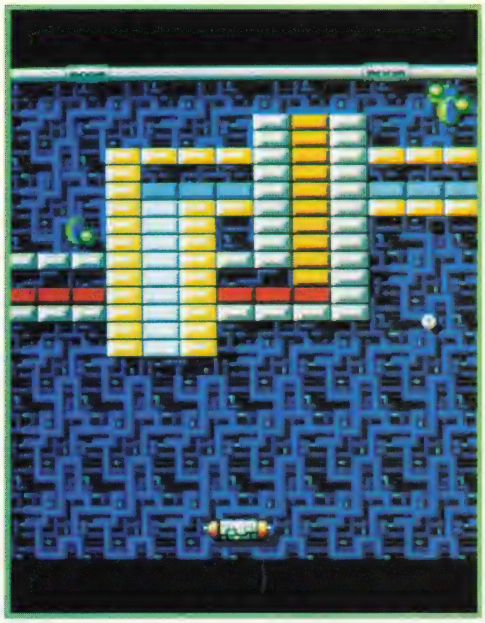
The well presented vector graphics, combined with the zappy effects all helped to give Empire that polished feel. I thoroughly enjoyed this game, in spite of the asteroid level. My only gripe is that the game's ending is a little bland. The first incarnation, Star Wars, at least saw you accomplishing something with the destruction of the Death Star. The Empire Strikes Back, unfortunately, ends rather abruptly.

NC

Take one of the most successful movies in film history, combine it with recognizable speech synthesis and all-action game-play, and you have guaranteed success. This was certainly the case for Domark and Star Wars, and so the logical step was to commission Vektor Graphics to produce a sequel. However, it can't have been a long commission, because, apart from a different scenario, the inclusion of At-At Walkers and new speech synthesis, The Empire Strikes Back is very similar to the original game. I must remark on the fact that one minute the fight takes place in space against the Tie Fighters, and the next moment, without indication that you have changed from the Millenium Falcon to the Snow Speeder, the battle continues against the terrain-bound At-Ats. Undoubtedly, the game-play is non-stop action and great fun, but put the two games together and you would have difficulty telling one from the other.

JS





"Break Out clones are now two-a-penny. So will this sequel of a sequel rake in the "Doh" for Imagine?"

ARKANOID II

IMAGINE (£19.95)

The long overdue follow-up to Arkanoid is here. With its pixel-perfect backdrops, colourful blocks, smooth movement, and a whole host of new features, you may have thought that Doh would have been awaited with baited breath. But somehow the game has slipped into the abyss amongst the myriad of other similar ST titles.

The Revenge of Doh is a highly playable breakout game which improves even further on its predecessor's achievements. However, with all its added refinements I'm still unsure about Doh. With the market being somewhat awash with this type of game at the moment, I don't think it will become quite the success Imagine had imagined. Still, if you haven't bought a breakout clone yet, Doh is a very safe bet.

NC

Thankfully, Imagine haven't bothered too much with a plot, although you thought you had destroyed the mighty Doh in the original.

The game takes place over sixty-six, individually named, deviously designed screens, of which only thirty-three can be accessed in one game. Before, on completion of a screen, you could only exit from the right-hand side, but now an exit appears on both sides. After a lot of practice, not to mention trial and error, the easiest(!) route can be found.

Converted by Pete Johnson, who programmed the original, Revenge of Doh basically takes the same formula, and adds new screens and new capsules. All the old favourites are present including sticky bat, expanded bat, laser, extra life and slo-ball. But it is the new additions that steal the show: a "D" capsule splits the ball into eight, fast-moving, pieces; an "I" capsule gives your bat a ghostly shadow which effectively doubles its size; collecting an "N" will split the ball into three, as in the predecessor, but each time you lose one, another will appear. Most impressive of all though, is the "M" capsule which creates a metal ball which just wipes out anything and everything that gets in its way, without being deflected. Most of the aforementioned appear quite frequently, but there are two capsules that do not appear so often; the "B" and the blank, glowing capsules, which grant you with an early exit, or a random feature - normally thirty-two balls, respectively. So that you don't get everything your own way,Imagine have thoughtfully put in a couple of capsules that either reduce the size of your "Vaus" bat, or gives you two bats - although this sounds helpful, the ball normally shoots straight through the gap in the middle!

The most irritating feature of the original makes an unwelcome return - the floating nasties, who seem to be back with more of a vengeance than big, bad Doh himself! Whereas on the original they followed no set pattern, certain waves contain a new breed which bounce down the screen - often off your bat, causing the ball to be deflected erratically.

During your journey you will meet several of Doh's decoys. These are huge effigies of himself, or monstrous creations from his warped mind. They are extremely difficult to destroy, requiring many hits from the ball which you must deflect whilst avoiding various flak he throws at you - and to to make things even harder, there are no capsules when on these screens! It will take much bravery to conquer Doh's devious trap; are you "batty" enough to risk it? **STA**

STA Rating

64%

GRAPHICS:69% SOUND: 45%
LASTING APPEAL: 59% ADDICTIVENESS: 69%
DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD 1ST DAY SCORE: 90975

With the huge pile of "Break Out" clones available at present, I am surprised that Imagine considered releasing this. However, it has one thing that the others often lack - addictiveness. The screens are well designed and will have you burning the midnight oil in order to reach Doh. A polished game that will appeal to all fans of the original.

SM

"Ball hits brick"- OK, you try writing captions for yet another Bat 'n' Ball game!

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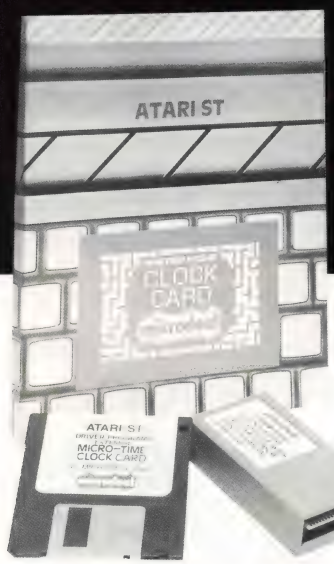

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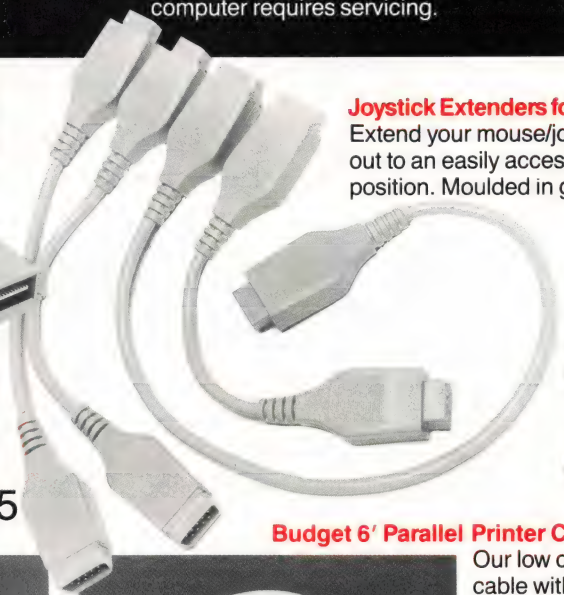

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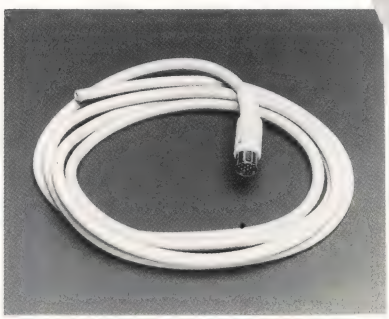

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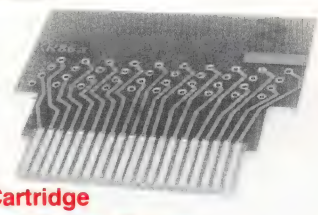

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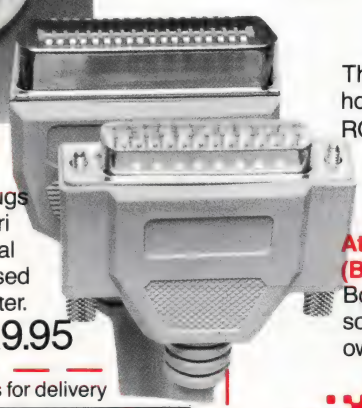

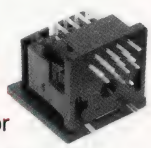

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I know that there have been cases of industrial espionage in the software industry - ideas are leaked out, written into software and released before the originator knows what's hit him. But although Eliminator and 'Roadwars' from Melbourne House are very similar conceptions, but you can tell by the many differences in their presentation that they are two separate ideas, which by complete chance are very alike. Roadwars, like Eliminator, is graphically attractive and oozes initial 'wow' appeal as we say in the whacky world of computer magazines. But what about long-term appeal? We were sceptical about Roadwars' longevity, (STA issue 3), because of its lack of variety. But Eliminator has an ever-changing assortment of challenges and adversaries which makes it a clear winner - check out both games before making your choice!

JS

Eliminator, taking the Roadblasters theme a step further

"With a title like Eliminator I was expecting the game to feature those cool, bearded rockers, ZZ Top - boy, was I in for a surprise!"

ELIMINATOR

HEWSON (£19.95)

I feel really sorry for the people who live in the land of the game scenario. If they are not being invaded by rows of chunky, green aliens who descend row by row, they are defending their highways from being overrun by huge, fast-moving ones. So it must have been with at least a sigh of weariness that they went down to their underground shelters for protection from the latest attempt to wipe them out - the Eliminator. This massive, seemingly indestructible war machine travels from planet to planet with the sole intention of erasing all life from the face of them, and now it is your turn. You have been chosen to attempt to save your planet, so, with more than a trickle of sweat on your brow, you enter your road cruiser.

The chequered road you travel on is very long, and as you skim towards the road's end, you will encounter many hazards strewn along it, including barriers which are impervious to your fire and alien foes who are sent out by the Eliminator to destroy anyone foolish enough to try and stop him. Having squeezed through a tiny gap in two obstacles, the first of the alien formations rears its ugly head. Luckily, your craft is armed with a laser, but this rather weak weapon can be upgraded by collecting one of the regular blue pyramids that are scattered along the road. Five extra styles of weapon can be collected, and by moving the joystick up or down, you can choose the one you feel will kill an attack wave particularly quickly. Should you lose a life though, the last weapon you collected will be lost. Your rapidly decreasing ammunition level is shown by an orange bar to the right of the screen

Being a great fan of John Phillips' work on the 8-bits, I was really looking forward to seeing how he took to the ST. Thankfully, it seems that he has taken to it like a fish to water, turning out what must be the most playable game this month. The multi-coloured backdrops are incredible, with planets circling in the background and some really nice colour blending. Incredibly, the game doesn't slow down because of them. A brilliant game and one that deserves to be in any self-respecting ST owner's game library.

SM

and this is depleted with every volley of shots you fire, but can be replenished in the same manner as you collect weaponry - by collecting orange cubes. Also shown as an energy bar is the strength of your shield, and should this reach zero, the next collision or hit will destroy you - resulting in one of the most effective explosions you are ever likely to see in a computer game - and the loss of one of your three lives.

As you travel the cosmic cause-

KEYBOARD		✘
JOYSTICK	✔	
MOUSE		✘
COLOUR	✔	
MONO		✘
520ST	✔	
1040ST	✔	

Well, hot diggidy! This one's a real action-packed game. Just like Audiogenic's Helter Skelter, Eliminator is a real patience-tester when it comes to frustrating gameplay! If you prefer slow thoughtful games, then you'd better look elsewhere, this game is strictly for arcade-addicts only!

While not looking completely dissimilar to the Overlander/Road Blasters type of game, Eliminator has been tweaked just enough to make it that little bit different. The graphics give a wonderful sensation of movement and they scroll beautifully. Eliminator certainly has an addictive quality and should not be missed!

NC

ways, your speed remains constant - very fast - and there is no room for error. The obstacles and aliens come thick and fast, so very good hand-and-eye co-ordination, not to mention reflexes, are needed. An example of this is that if the going gets too tough on the ground in a tunnel, by driving over a well-placed trampoline, you can defy the laws of gravity and drive along the ceiling, and take on the aliens there! Huge inpenetrable barriers zoom towards you, with no apparent way to get past them - that is, until you see the conveniently placed springboard which, by hitting, will bounce you over with ease. My major problem, though, came in the form of the glowing targets. These annoying barriers always seemed to appear when I was using a scatter-gun, and before I had time to change my weapon, I was witnessing that lovely, and very frequent, explosion again.

Completion of a level is far from easy, but should you survive, a huge, dark expanse will expand before your eyes. But fear not, for this is just the portal to the next level, and after your ship has entered it, you will receive generous bonuses for your remaining fuel and ammunition. You will also be given a password which, when typed into the "help" screen, will allow you to continue on the level you died on. **STA**

Select your weapons carefully, then prepare to blast through one of the numerous barriers which you will encounter.

STA Rating

80%

GRAPHICS: 88%
SOUND: 63%

LASTING APPEAL: 75%
ADDICTIVENESS: 84%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 32000

CASE FOR CONVERSION

Black Tiger
Capcom

Enter once more into a world of the undead. A tomb reeks of old

bones and rotted flesh. A place where many others have gone before but never returned. This is the world of Black Tiger.

Bringing back memories of the classic Ghosts and Goblins, Black Tiger is a platform game based on progression. Your character, an armour-clad, blue-eyed hunk, has to fight his way through eight levels of caverns before the game is completed. During your travels you will find captured wizards, who can be saved, and nauseating creatures of the undead. These are pretty difficult to avoid, and it's no good just jumping in feet first, as a tactical approach is required.

As you search each level for the exit, helped by arrows pointing to the correct path, you will come across items which will help you in the game. There are keys which open chests, coins which can be used in various 'barter' houses, and weapons such as chains and lasers which have a more powerful effect than your normal whip. The chests can either bring a reward, such as coins, or throw out a fireball which doesn't do your health a lot of good!

The old wizards who can be saved will reward you for your valour. Most will give you an item, but some will sell you a vast amount of goodies. You can buy extra armour, extra shields or more weapons, depending on what you can afford.

At the end of each level you have to fight off the guardian. On the first three levels these are blocks which get progressively harder, and then they take the form of dragons which, again, take more hits to kill as you progress from stage to stage. Also found on each level is a dungeon stage. This is just as dangerous as the other levels, yet holds many bonuses and items.

Displayed at the top of the screen is your health. Each hit that you take obviously decreases this, but, with extra shields and armour, you can prolong the meeting with your maker. It's also possible to regain health through potions obtained by bartering with the National 'Elf Service!

Black Tiger appears to take quite a few ideas from Capcom's oldie, Ghosts and Goblins. A lot of the ghouls rise from the ground in a similar fashion, and the screen scrolls in four directions with long falls not affecting you. Your hero also loses his armour after a few hits, usually bringing about squeals of laughter from any females loitering near the machine.

The graphics in Black Tiger are neat and colourful, yet, again, they are very reminiscent of Ghosts and Goblins. The sprites are slightly larger than normal and the backgrounds have been designed differently, but otherwise it is basically the same.

Black Tiger is quite addictive in its own right, but contains nothing noticeably new to keep the 10p's going from pocket to slot. It's not a particularly easy game, which won't go down well with those who play arcade games just for the hell of it.

Although Black Tiger doesn't rival the Ghosts and Goblins legend, ST owners will still welcome it with open arms, as they have already missed the previous platform game. There isn't any reason why Black Tiger will be anything but a first rate conversion, as the graphics don't surpass the capabilities of the ST, and there isn't an awful lot of gameplay to squeeze in (if Ghosts and Goblins can be programmed in 64K, Black Tiger should fit in 256K!) The outcome from U.S. Gold should be interesting.

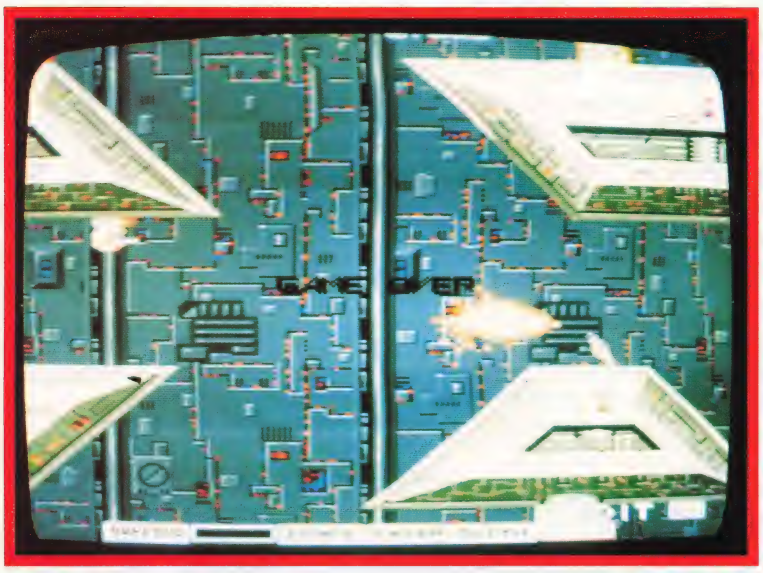
Vulcan Venture
Konami

In possibly the last of one of the most successful sagas in arcade history, you must battle it out with Bacterion forces once more and save your planet. Life's never easy, but when the Bacterions have developed new aliens to add to their awesome aliens to add to their awesome arsenal, just living to tell the tale is tough enough!

Although there are distinct similarities between Vulcan Venture and its two predecessors, new ideas have been developed and introduced. The first is at the beginning, where you have the choice between four combinations of five weapons that will be available to you throughout the game. Only with practice will you discover the best combination suited to you, and then maybe you might have some kind of chance! You choose your weapons by accumulating red pods that appear after certain aliens have been decimated, the quantity deciding the type.

As with so many other arcade games of late, the atmosphere in Vulcan Venture creates frustration and plenty of elevated pulse rates. Your adrenaline pumps as you weave and fire, a stray bullet catches you unawares, there's a sudden flash of blinding light and all that's left is a metal wreck floating through space. Another credit flashes on the screen and the seemingly endless cycle of near misses, ceaseless fire and untimely deaths starts again.

Vulcan Venture differs from any other scrolling shoot'em-up as the whole screen moves as your ship does. On the first level, which has many brilliantly devised red stars with huge fire serpents erupting from the auras, the scrolling can be pretty hair-raising, and concentration is needed at all times. You'll only be one more tin coffin in the black void otherwise, the only consolation being that your death was quick. If you blink, you literally won't know what hit you, because the action never slows down! As is the norm with many Konami games, there is a guardian to defeat at the end of each level. The first one, a large hostile phoenix, has to be shot in the head many times before it finally perishes in a large cloud of smoke and fire - ashes to ashes, so to speak. It constantly breathes fire and lasers which follow you around the screen, so you will have to be alert if you aren't to get a singed rear end.



The second level includes just as many deadly traps and bloodthirsty nasties as the first, and you will need to be fairly fast on your feet. Again, the screen scrolls very fast as you move up or down, through a large biochemical web structure that needs trimming away with the most powerful weapon you can lay your hands on. Picking up pods on the way is not too difficult, since this level's collision detection leaves a lot to be desired!

Further in, small tubes eject hoards of very mobile face huggers that go in all directions, so a few multiples and a powerful laser don't go amiss. The guardian really gives you a run for your money, with tentacles thrashing around and the nucleus only being vulnerable when it's chucking boulders at you!

We'd hate to ruin the excitement of what happens next, but it gets even tougher. Huge ice blocks float about one stage - they need a real pounding - and another level speeds up as you progress into it, leaving a novice at the game totally bewildered! Some nifty ducking and diving is the only way to complete this level, allowing you to shake hands with one of the most awesome mothership (at least, I think that's what Dennis called it) in the game!

There's more polish to Vulcan Venture than there is on a Sandhurst passing-out parade - the opening screens paying brief homage in a sepia flashback to Nemesis and Salamander, setting up the game superbly. Throughout, there are extra touches that put the game way ahead of all the others of a similar layout. An American voice announces each weapon as it is collected, and tells you where to hit each guardian. The high-score table is of the highest quality, and the graphics even outshine the formidable 'R-Type', with excellent parallax scrolling and outstanding detail and colouring. It's quite an experience to play, let alone bathe in the technical excellence!

Although Vulcan Venture is one of the most exciting new games for quite a while, it won't be difficult to fully convert. Obviously, fitting all of the gameplay and scrolling into a conversion might mean sacrificing the speech, but graphically it will pose few worries. ST owners have already missed out on the classics, Nemesis and Salamander, and it would be very sad if we had to miss out on Vulcan Venture too, let's hope that somebody intends to convert it, as it is one stylish game!

Thanks to:
Leisure World Amusements, Victoria Parade, Devon and Electrocoin

STA

GIVING THE GAME AWAY

There haven't been so many tips this month, probably due to the fact that you are all enjoying our wonderful summer(!). Still, I know it will only be temporary and that you will be back with a vengeance next month. Who knows, if enough tips get sent in I might increase the prize value, or the number of them!

For all you Dungeon Master fans out there, you will find a complete tips feature elsewhere in this issue.

Ikari Warriors - Elite

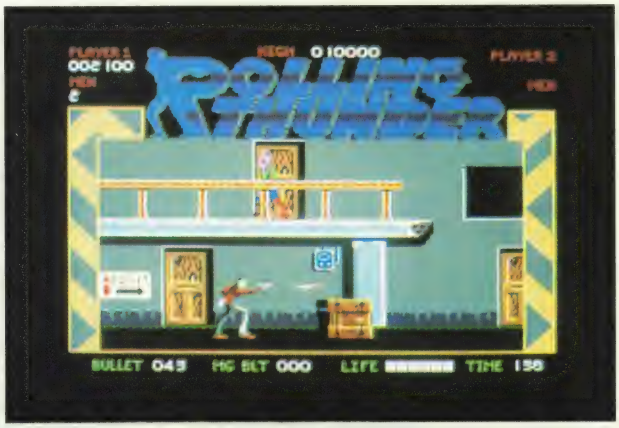
This was, I feel, very underrated in our issue 1 review - still, it takes all sorts. Any road up, score over 18,000 to get yourself on the high-score table and type FREERIDE. The message "1988 FEB" will appear instead and on restarting your tough little soldier will be invincible. Ta very much to Marc Clifton from Birmingham, and Matthew Whitton from Newhaven for that.

Actually, whilst on the subject. Matthew also sent in the key to various bonuses you receive on blowing up an installation or on shooting the men in the bright red suits. Here it is:

K - Smart bomb. B - High-power grenades.
L - Longer-range bullet. S,A - Shorter shot.
F - Faster bullet rate.

Rolling Thunder - U.S. Gold

Our man in Basildon, Mark Lawrence, has sent in a useful cheat for Tiertex's conversion of the arcade game. When on the title screen, type JIMBBBY (return). Just above the controls, on the scrolly message, the words "Cheat Mode" will appear; start play and infinite health and lives are yours.



International Karate - System 3

Dig out your copy of this old classic, blow the dust off and load it up. When loaded, press F3 and F4 together and - voila! - a three-player game. Though you must have three joy-sticks to play it. Thanks go to Mark Purslow from Marple, Cheshire, for that little gem.

Carrier Command - Rainbird

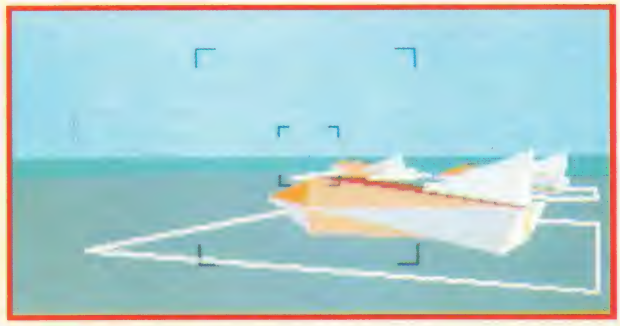
These are the last tips I am going to print for this game, so please don't send in any more for it - have a crack at something else.

Using Mark Lawrence's issue 4 cheat, hold down the "7" key on the keypad and time will fly by - saving both boredom and patience. Ta very much, Neil Levine from London, and Christian Simpson from Surrey.

Also, at the start of a game, press F10, F9, F8 etc, until you reach F1. Now press Backspace, and the enemy buildings will be out of action. After a while, the screen will show:

ENEMY CARRIER DESTROYED!
Remaining islands can be captured for maximum points.
Do you want to continue?

Now click on "No" and the congratulatory screen will appear. Rather takes the whole point out of it though, doesn't it? Anyway, thanks to A. Mangham who hails from Lancashire, and Colin Punter from Fife.



Overlander - Elite

Though only reviewed this month, this has been out long enough for our old prize-winner, M. Jordan, and Mark Gregg to tip.

• **Level 1** - Choose the illegal mission, and take 16 blocks of fuel minimum, along with five battering rams and a flare bomb.

• **Level 2** - Once again, choose the illegal mission. But take only 8 - 13 blocks of fuel. Also take; leanburn conversion, armour plating, maximum battering rams, and fill up with flame bombs.

• **Level 3** - Be a do-gooder and take the legal mission. Take 9 - 13 blocks of fuel and superbrakes, turbo conversion, maximum battering rams, 5 or 6 extra lives, bullet proofing and, once again, top up with flame bombs.

• **Level 4** - Legal mission with 14 - 16 blocks of fuel. Take blades, maximum battering rams, 6 - 7 extra lives, maximum bullet proofing, and the rest with rockets and flare bombs.

• **Level 5** - Legal mission with 16 - 19 blocks of fuel. Now add Maximum battering rams, maximum extra lives, maximum bullet proofing and as many bombs and rockets as possible.

The weapons all vary in power and usefulness, so Marc has sent in this guide:

Flare bomb - Best for blowing up bikes and fences.
Rockets - Blow up fences.
Smart bomb - Bit obvious really!
Turbo conversion - Not worth it unless you have super brakes.
Armour plating - Allows you to kill bikes or cars without getting hurt.
Super brakes - Best used in later levels in co-ordination with the turbo conversion.
Wheel blades - Generally useless but get rid of cars.
Leanburn conversion - Needed to complete all levels after level 2.
Extra lives - Another obvious one!
Bullet proofing - Not essential, but comes in handy on later levels.
Battering ram - Cheap and always useful.

Both Marc and M.J. sent in this list of other road inhabitants and the way to kill them:

Kamikazees - Keep central and keep firing. They weave in front of you, causing their own demise.
Roadhogs - Nudge them until they collide with a road-side obstacle, or shoot them as they approach from each side and swerve in.
Off Roaders - For the first three levels, keep to the left of the centre and continously fire. Their bombs will fall short, just on your right. Stay left, being careful not to crash into anything, and keep firing. On the later levels you must drive on the other side of the road as the process reverses.
Crawlers - Speed up to 120 - 140 mph, staying in the middle, and you won't get hit.
Overturned cars - Due to a strange quirk, if you travel at full whack you won't die on hitting them.
Fences - Travel at roughly 130 mph for maximum control, and at 110 mph for later levels.

Bionic Commando - Go!

A few useful cheats for all you swingin' squaddies out there!

On level two, run towards the far right wall and stand below the platform next to it. Now any enemy who fall down can be easily shot for 400 points each, lots of these and you will be able to score enough for extra lives. Should time run out, you will begin again without losing a life.

Also, if you fancy a tasty 1,000,000 points, finish a level when the timer reaches zero and there you are!

Thanks to Darren Ithell from Birkenhead, Merseyside, for those.

Better Dead Than Alien - Electra

This really was a disappointment. Oh well, Craig Allcock from Lancs, Paul Cooper from Walthamstow, Steven Minns from Norwich, and Robert Brown from Oldham liked it - but then again, somebody had to!

First of all, for various effects use Paul's cheat:

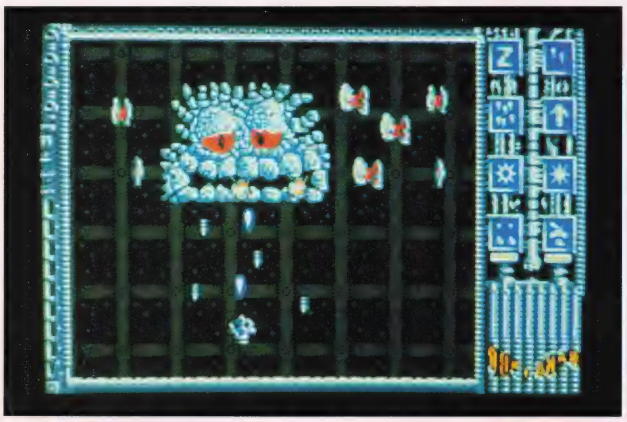
Type ELV, and press the following for extra features:

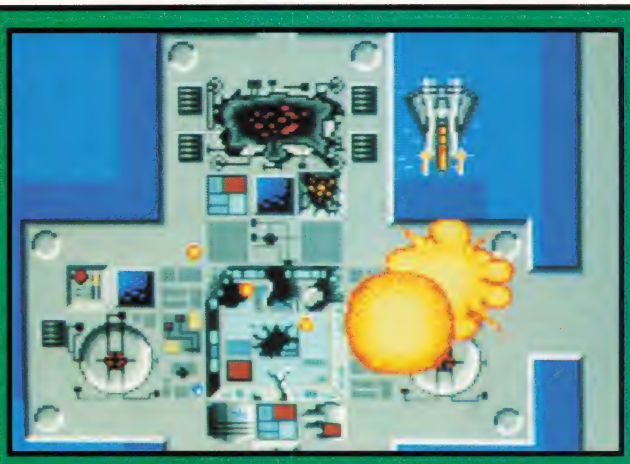
F1 - Scatterbots.
F2 - Multiple fire.
F3 - Auto-repeat saturation fire.
F4 - Armour missile.
F5 - Stun.
F6 - Neutron bomb.
F7 - Clone ship.
F8 - Shield.
F9 - Skip level.
F10 - Extra power bars.

Level Passwords:

1. Elektra - Practice.
2. Syzygy - A doddle.
3. Drambuie - Very easy.
4. Plug - Easy.
5. Soprano - Quite easy.
6. Mayonnaise - Average.
7. Faucet - Some effort.
8. Potato - Much effort.
9. Woomera - Great effort.
10. Narcissus - Total effort.
11. Debutante - Hard!
12. Firkin - Real Hard.
13. Acoustic - Very hard.
14. Triptych - Ludicrous.
15. Jabberwocky - Absurd.
16. Whimsicle - Possible?
17. Cornucopia - Do this one.
18. Punjabi - O.K. Now this.
19. Tiddly Pom - Still here?!
20. Kewpie Doll - Brilliant!
21. Sepulchre - Impossible...
22. Euphenism - Or was it?
23. Grammerian - The end.
24. Crossword - The end 2.
25. Quarantine - That's it!

Well, what can I say after all that lot but - Phew!





Sidewinder - Mastertronic

I love this - especially the explosions! Dave Penth has sent in a few guidelines you should follow:

Try to stay central, as it is easy to get trapped by a hail of bullets.

The alien attack patterns do not differ, so try to memorise them so you can destroy them more rapidly.

Shoot as many ground-based installations - then they can't fire back!

Try not to shoot things as you fly over them, the explosions can hide deadly bullets.

Backlash - Novagen

Fancy 1,000,000 points on this as well? If so, follow Jason Santos of Holloways' tips:

Find two ports near each other (so that both can be seen on screen at once). Position your ship so that both ports are in your line of fire, and you can shoot any ship that comes out of the port without moving. Don't move and keep firing! Missiles should miss, but it is better to lose a life than this position.

And Finally...

Prize winners are: Mark Gregg for his slightly more definitive Overlander tips, and Craig Allcock for his in-depth tips for BDTA. Right I'm off'.

SM

STA

HOTSHOT GOODIES

The guys at Prism are promoting their Hotshot game by offering you the chance of becoming a real-life hotshot yourself! FIVE winners will travel to Great Warley, near Brentwood in Essex, on November 6th 1988 to take part in Combat Zone. There, you'll be fitted with overalls, a pair of protective goggles, either a pistol or rifle and an ammo belt holding 21 PAINT pellets. You then form two teams with other players and commence to 'splat' your opponents and attempt to gain control of their base camp. You will be constantly topped up with paint pellets, so you'll have a great day out trying to make pretty patterns over your opponents' overalls. IMPORTANT - To participate in the combat game, you MUST be OVER 16 years of age on the 10th October 1988. Each winner will also receive a copy of Prism Leisure's Hotshot, as will 25 runners-up. Just answer the questions below and get them to the ST Action offices before the 10th October 1988. Entrants who are under 16 will only take part in the draw for the runners-up prizes.

1 - Name the game:
Hotshot / Artificial Dreams / Football Manager II

2 - How many actual game screen-shots are there in this issue of ST Action?

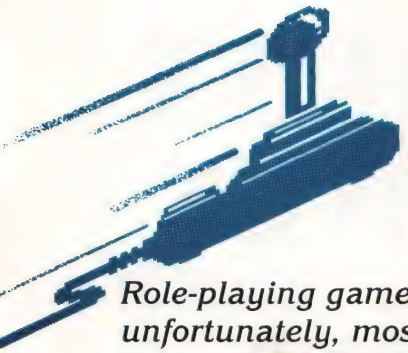
ANSWER TO QUESTION 1: .....

ANSWER TO QUESTION 2 : .....

Name ....
Address ....
....
....
Post code ....
Daytime telephone number ....

ST Action Competition Rules:
The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute an alternative of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as soon as possible and prizes despatched as quickly as possible. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Gollner Publishing Ltd and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

Send entry to:
HOTSHOT Competition,
ST Action, 10 Theatre Lane
Chichester, West Sussex
PO19 1SR



DUNGEON TIPS TIPS TIPS

Role-playing games are available in abundance on the ST but, unfortunately, most gamesters fail to look any further than the packaging. FTL's Dungeon Master, however, makes a mockery of that statement as we at the ST Action office have discovered. Your letters, tips, maps and pleas for help have been arriving by the sack load, indicating that Dungeon Master is undoubtedly one of the most popular games we have encountered in terms of reader response and enthusiasm. Issue two of ST Action saw us claiming that nobody had finished the game. Of course you proved us wrong, many of you having managed to restore peace to the dungeons. It seems that FTL have created a monster - Dungeon Master is surely the reason for many of you arriving at work or school more than a little bleary - eyed. The number of cries for help we have received have been tremendous, so in reply, Nick and Steve have compiled "The ST Action Complete Dungeon Master Player's Guide". May we thank all of those who have taken the time to write in with tips, and especially Kevin Hammond and Martin Cooper.

Levels of expertise

Neophyte, Novice, Apprentice, Journeyman, Craftsman, Artisan, Adept, Expert and Master.

Useful items to carry

Food, Water, Keys, Potions, Empty Flasks, Coins, Rings, Ful Bombs, Ven Bombs, Mirror of Dawn, Magnifying Glass, Rabbit's Foot, Chests, Gems, Rope, Magical Boxes, Necklaces.

Magic is an integral part of the dungeon, and therefore, if you wish to survive, you must learn how to use it. Below is a list of spells and potions that can be found within the dungeon vaults. Many of the spells will not be accessible to you until your characters reach the desired priest or wizard levels. Remember, practice makes perfect!

Potions

VI ..... = Health potion
YA ..... = Stamina potion
VI BRO ..... = Poison cure potion
YA BRO ..... = Magical shield potion
DES VEN ..... = Poison potion
YA BRO DAIN ..... = Wisdom potion
YA BRO NETA ..... = Vitality potion
OH BRO ROS ..... = Dexterity potion
FUL BRO KU ..... = Strength potion
ZO BRO RA ..... = Mana Potion

Spells

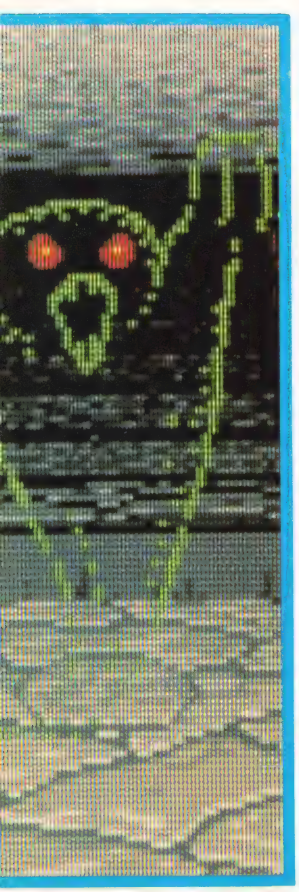
FUL ..... = Magical torch
YA IR ..... = Magical shield
ZO ..... = Open doors
DES VEN ..... = Poison spell
DES EW ..... = Anti-ghost spell
OH VEN ..... = Cloud of poison
YA BRO ..... = Magic Shield
YA BRO ROS ..... = Magic footprints
OH KATH RA ..... = Lightning bolt
FUL IR ..... = Fireball
FUL BRO NETA ..... = Fire shield
OH EW RA ..... = Magic vision
OH EW SAR ..... = Invisibility
OH IR RA ..... = Create light
DES IR SAR ..... = Create darkness
ZO KATH RA = Create plasma to free gem

Answers to certain puzzles within the game.

"Test your strength" - To open the portcullis, you must throw something through the forcefield and get it to land on the pressure pad at the far end of the tunnel.
"This fountain takes one wish" - Simply place a coin in the fountain and wish that the door would open!
Items needed to answer the questions in the riddle room - Coin, Bow, Mirror, Blue gem. Note: Three objects will open the door, the fourth will present a further prize.
"Time is of the essence" - Drop all your heavy possessions, press the button and quickly move four steps left and one forward.
"Don't let a closed door stop you" - Grab the axe and smash down the door!
"None shall pass" - Cobblers, hack down the door!
"Cast thy influence, Cast thy might" - Magically open the door then throw something so that it lands on the pressure pad at the end of the tunnel.
"When is rock not rock" - When it's an illusion. Step left then forwards.
"This wall says nothing" - Yes it does, although it's of no real importance.
"This is my prisoner, let him suffer" - Put the poor fellow out of his misery, but beware the consequences.
"Short cut" - Turn a gold key in the lock to operate a teleport system on the level. Try using this system to destroy the worms - make a worm follow you to the teleporter, enter the forcefield, wait a few seconds and then teleport back. With a bit of luck you should land on the monster's head, if you don't, then repeat the process.
"Lighter than a feather" - Corbamite weighs 0.0 Kg so try putting that in the alcove.
"Beware my twisted humour, the deceiver, the snake" - Turning left first, snake your way though the maze until you reach the doors on the opposite side of the labyrinth.

MASTER

TIPS TIPS TIPS



Items found behind the turquoise doors in the tomb of the firestaff:

1. Gem of Ages, Sceptre of life, Illumulet.
2. Dragonspit, Boots of Speed.
3. Crown of Nerra, Magic Box.
4. Flamebain, Lightning sword.

Choosing a party

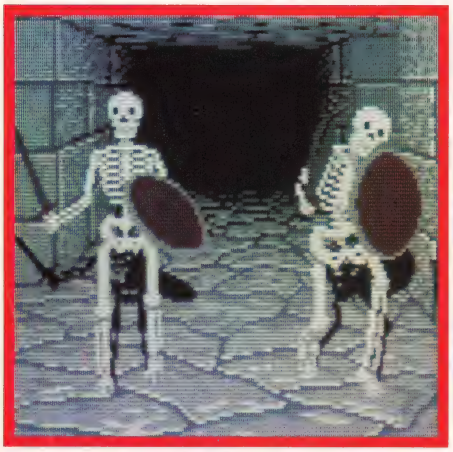
Actually deciding which characters to include in your party can become quite a headache. It is recommended that less experienced players "resurrect" their party, thus keeping the character's former attributes. Only when a player has become more familiar with the dungeon should he attempt to "reincarnate" characters. The game can be completed with either type of party, but just to help the beginners, here is a list of all the former champions and their abilities:-

Name	Skills	Hlth	Stam	Mana	Str	Dex	Wis	Vit	A/M	A/F	Items
Alex	App.Ninja Nov.Wizard	50	57	13	44	55	45	40	35	40	Sling
Azizi	Nov.Fighter App.Ninja	61	77	7	47	48	42	45	30	35	Hide Shield 2 Daggers
Boris	Nov.Ninja App.Wizard	35	65	28	35	45	55	40	45	40	Rabbit's foot
Chani	Nov.Fighter App.Wizard	47	67	20	37	47	57	37	47	37	Moonstone
Daroou	App.Fighter Neo.Wizard	100	65	6	50	30	35	45	30	45	
Elija	Nov.Fighter App.Priest	60	58	22	42	40	42	36	53	40	Magic Box
Gando	App.Ninja Nov.Wizard	39	63	26	39	45	47	33	48	43	2 Poison Darts
Gothmog	Jny.Wizard	60	55	18	40	43	48	34	50	59	Cloak of Night
Halk	Jny.Fighter	90	75	0	55	43	30	46	38	48	Helmet Wooden Club
Hawk	Nov.Fighter App.Priest	70	85	10	45	35	38	55	35	35	2 Arrows
Hissa	App.Fighter Nov.Ninja	80	61	5	58	48	35	35	43	55	
Iaido	App.Fighter Nov.Priest	48	65	11	43	55	40	35	45	50	Samurai Sword
Leif	App.Fighter Nov.Priest	75	70	7	46	40	39	50	45	45	
Leyla	Jny.Ninja	48	60	3	40	53	45	47	45	35	Rope
Linflas	App.Fighter Nov.Wizard	65	50	12	45	45	47	35	50	35	Bow
Mophus	Jny.Priest	55	55	19	42	35	40	48	40	45	3 foods
Nabi	App.Priest Nov.Wizard	55	65	15	41	36	45	45	55	55	Staff
Sonja	Jny.Fighter	65	70	2	54	45	39	49	40	40	Sword Choker
Stamm	Jny.Fighter	75	80	0	52	43	35	50	35	55	Axe
Syra	Nov.Priest App.Wizard	53	72	15	38	35	43	45	42	40	Apple
Tiggy	Nov.Ninja App.Wizard	25	45	36	30	45	50	35	59	40	Wand
Wutse	Nov.Ninja App.Priest	45	47	20	38	35	53	45	47	40	3 Throwing Stars
Wuuf	App.Ninja Nov.Priest	40	50	30	33	57	45	40	35	40	Empty Flask
Zed	Nov.Fighter Nov.Ninja Nov.Priest Nov.Wizard	60	60	10	40	40	40	50	40	40	Torch

TIPS TIPS TIPS

GIANT RATS

MUMMIES



SKELETONS

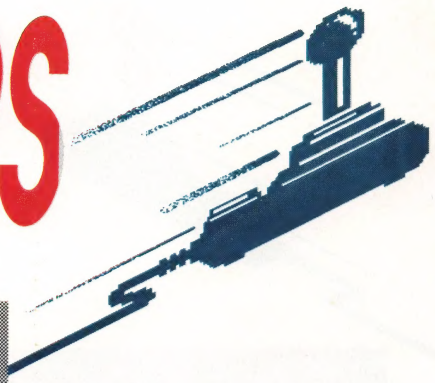
Monsters

There is a myriad of monsters to be found within the dungeon. We now discuss all of these guardians and tell you the best way to deal with them.

Mummies - Mummies are the first monsters which are encountered and therefore are quite easy to kill. The most favoured method of destroying these creatures is to throw items at them. Alternatively, a swift blow with a Falchion or club often works wonders.
Screamers - Like Mummies, Screamers are also relatively simple to kill. Remember, their remains can also be used for food. Screamers are perfect for practising Ninja skills on, too!
Blue Ogres - These club-wielding monsters, whilst being relatively easy to kill, can inflict serious damage upon a player. Again, Ninja skills may be developed in combat with these creatures. Fireballs, too, have a noticeable effect on them. Make sure you have an escape route planned if a quick escape is necessary.
Rock Monsters - These potentially deadly creatures have a nasty tendency to spit poison at our heroes. The four most effective ways to kill them are as follows:
1. Constant bashing by your fighters will weaken these hideous beasts.
2. Opening a trap door beneath the monsters will send them plummeting down a level and therefore weaken them. Beware, however - this method may backfire as the monsters may teleport back up to your location.
3. Trapping the monsters under a door will severely hurt them.
4. Try cooking the creatures by throwing fireballs at them.

Ghosts - These non-material beings seems to scare your party to death. Use magic to weaken and eventually kill them. If, however, you have found the Vorpal blade then I suggest you try that. Certain objects also contain a Dispell option, cast this spell help destroy any non-material beings.
Pink Worms - probably one of the most feared creatures found in the dungeon. The pink worms are best dealt with by a door, otherwise use magic and brute force in your effort to rid the vaults of the seemingly never-ending attack. Remember to have those anti-poison potions on hand!
Skeletons - Like the Blue Trolls, skeletons are easy to kill but they can also inflict serious damage on your party. Try fireballs on these loathsome creatures, they don't like it you know.
Giant Rats - Who ever said James Herbert was only imagining it? These giant rats sure prove to have a nasty nip. Use doors, fireballs and sheer brute force when dealing with these monsters. Take the drumsticks as a source of food for later.
Beholders - These strange-looking creatures are quite adept at using magic. As well as throwing fireballs and poison clouds at you, these monsters have the ability to open doors! Fireballs are your best defence. Physical attacks can also be carried out but wait until the monster's large eye closes.
Flying Snakes - These rather venomous snakes hover in dark corridors just waiting to devour your party. Close contact and fireballs soon, however, put an end to the reign of terror. Remember to have some poison cures on hand just in case one of your party gets bitten!
Green Tentacle Monsters - Lurking in some of the earlier dungeons, these foul creatures quiver slowly as they loll about. Beware, however, the lumps of poisonous green slime they lob at you. A sharp steel blade should put paid to their diabolical schemes.
Giant Wasp - These creatures are very fast, especially when in pursuit of their prey. They are easy to kill with either several swift blows or a couple of well-aimed fireballs. Remember to have some poison cures on hand as their bite is far worse than their bark.
Pixies - These mischievous little fellows will cause you no physical harm, they are merely interested in your wares. Before stealing anything from you they give out a little giggle before making off. A strong, well placed blow to the skull should sort them out. Failing that, a fireball always seems to do the trick. Remember, Pixies only steal from your characters' left hands.
Mini Dinosaurs - These low-level creatures are pretty few and far between within the dungeons. Watch out for their spikey tails as they can inflict serious damage. Several direct hits must be administered to these monsters before they finally die due to their heavy armour plating.
Small Sorcerers - These little folk use strong magic to weaken and eventually kill your party. Close physical attacks are usually the best answer for these meddlesome creatures. Look closely when you have managed to destroy them, as these magicians usually drop useful items. Take note that, when threatened these inhabitants often become invisible.

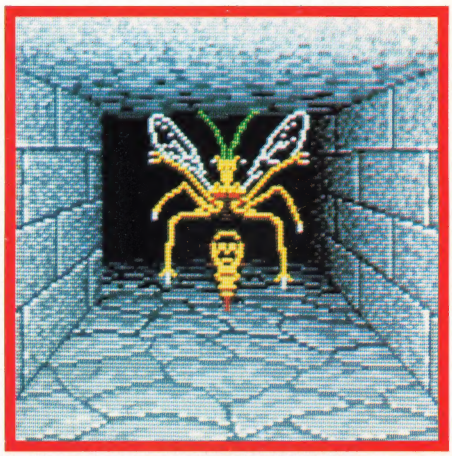
TIPS TIPS TIPS



Giant Scorpions - Fireballs are usually the best answer when dealing with these poisonous monsters. Quick in-and-out attacks also reap their rewards and don't forget the ever useful portcullis trick.
Insubstantial Triffid - If timed correctly, a fireball will inflict a limited amount of damage, but the best weapon to use is the ever-popular Vorpal blade. The DES EW spell and the Dispell option also works well.
Giant Spiders - Both fireballs and close contact work well against this enemy, the Morningstar weapon being particularly effective. Firing lightning bolts, however, is generally known to be the best method.
Chaos Knights - Knights, due to their armour, are particularly hard to kill. Physical contact is possible but is also slow and unrewarding. The best method seems to be trapping the knights under a doorway and fireballing the suckers. Remember, Knights drop full plate armour which may contain a hidden key. However, don't bother wearing the armour as it is supposed to be cursed.
Water Elemental - These rather harmless looking pools of water can soon turn nasty and zap your characters' strength. To destroy them, you will first need to cast a calm spell, found in a wand, and then draw your trusty Vorpal blade ready for the kill. You may also use the Dispell option found within many of the weapons, similarly a well placed DEZ EW spell will do the trick.
Fire Elemental - These should be attacked in exactly the same way as the Water Elementals, although the casting of the calm spell is not necessary.
False Grey Lord - After grabing the Firestaff, should you decide to return to the Dungeon entrance you will encounter this apparition. After confiscating the Firestaff he will put paid to your schemes by releasing two high-powered fireballs at your party. Therefore, don't bother with this silly move unless you have nothing better to do.
Stone Golem - Found within the tomb of the Firestaff, these guardians are particularly hard to destroy. Several well-placed blows and many fireballs are needed to take-out these mean creatures. I suggest they should be enticed into a chamber in which they can be locked. If you do decide to take them on, then make sure you have enough healing potions nearby.
Dragon - Wow, What a sight! This monster must be the most fearsome creature within the dungeons. In the middle of his chamber lies a stone pillar and your party should find itself chasing the dragon around this structure. Fireballs, poison and swift blows eventually finish off this vile creature. Try using Magical boxes to freeze life and therefore give yourself more time to chop the fiend. Remember, however, to keep out of the dragon's rather warm breath!
Devils - Found in a cavern just above the dragon's chamber these creatures seem very fond of fireballing unwanted guests. Still, if you can give as good as you get, then they shouldn't be too much bother.
Lord Chaos - This is it! The final showdown! Whilst dodging Chaos' fireballs and poison clouds, you must somehow manage to surround him within a fluxcage. Once this task has been performed he should be fused and thus finally destroyed.

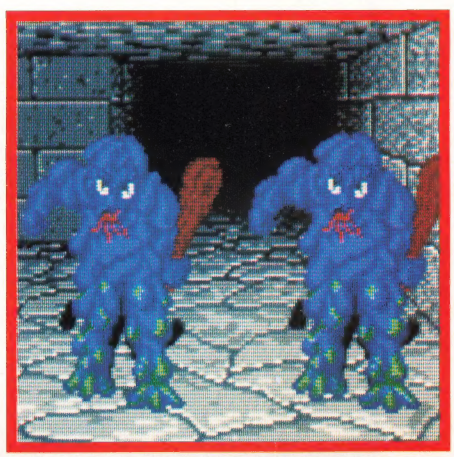
Extra reminders when combating monsters

Always use doorways to your advantage by shutting them on your prey.
If possible, remember to close doors after you, thus reducing the possibility of a monster sneaking up behind you.
Before going into battle have a possible escape route planned just in case things start to go wrong.
If you are fighting poisonous creatures always have a supply of cures on hand.
Use the magic boxes on stubborn creatures. Lure them under a doorway and freeze life. This allows you time either to beat the enemy to a pulp or to make good your escape.
Lead creatures over pits and then open the traps. Beware, however, the fall may not always kill the monsters and more often than not they reappear in the most awkward of places.
Give the staff of Mana or the Inquisitor sword to any characters who possess no magical abilities.



GIANT WASP

SMALL SORCERERS



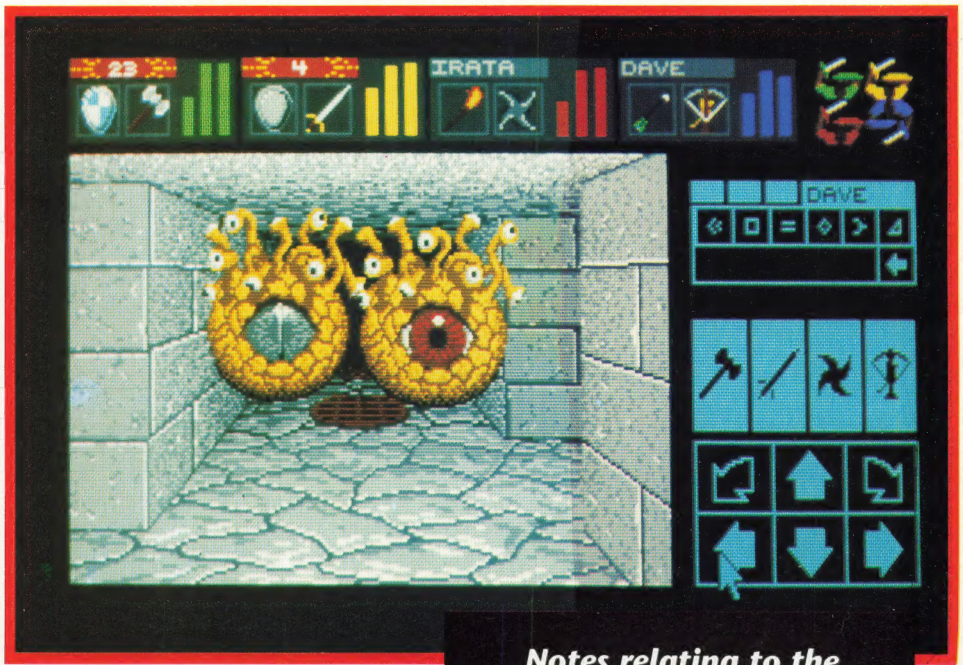
BLUE OGRES

TIPS TIPS TIPS

Snack Stop! - Food found throughout the Dungeon passages.

The top eight snacks in ascending order of nutrition.

1. *Dragon Steak*
2. *Rat Drumstick*
3. *Bread*
4. *Cheese*
5. *Screecher Slice*
6. *Apple*
7. *Sweet Corn*
8. *Worm Round*



Useful armour to wear

Dress your warriors in the following outfits for the best possible results.
Remember, fighters should be given their heavier plate armour!

1. Shield of Lyte, Helm of Lyte, Plate of Lyte, Poleyn of Lyte, Greaves of Lyte.
2. Shield of Darc, Helm of Darc, Plate of Darc, Poleyn of Darc, Greaves of Darc.
3. Large shield, Basenett, Mithral Aketon, Mithral Mail, Leg Plate.
4. Large shield, Basenett, Flamebain, Leg Mail, Leg Plate.

Note: Do not wear armour dropped by the Chaos Knights as it is cursed!

Item of use that can be located throughout the Dungeons

Level Found	Name of Item	Special Abilities
12.	Armour of Darc	Make you harder to be seen
10,11,12.	Armour of Lyte	Weighs less
7.	Bolt Blade	Fires lightning bolts (limited)
7.	Crown of Nerrax	+10 to Wisdom
11.	Diamond Edge	Extra Damage
7.	Dragon Spit	+7 to Mana
14.	Eye of Time	Freezes Life (limited)
?	Ferel Pendant	+1 Wizard level
14.	Firestaff & Power Gem	+1 Wizard level, +2 Priest Level
7.	Flamebain	+12 to anti-fire
13.	Flamitt	Fires Fireballs
11.	Fury	Fires Fireballs (limited)
10.	Hard Cleave	Extra Damage
7.	Illumulet	Creates light (limited)
7.	Inquisitor	+2 to Mana & Extra Damage
12.	Master Key	Opens a door within tomb
?	Moonstone Necklace	+3 to Mana
3,7,9,12.	Ra Keys	Opens doors within tomb
11.	Ruby Key	Opens a door within tomb
7.	Sceptre of Lyf	+5 to Mana, Heals & lights
12.	Snake Staff	+8 to Mana & Heals
?	Staff of Claws	+4 to Mana
10.	Staff of Mana	+10 to Mana & Dispell spell
9.	Storm Ring	Fires lightning bolts (limited)
3.	Teo Wand	+6 to Mana & Calm spell
6.	Vorpal Blade	+4 to Mana & Disrupt spell
7.	Winged Key	Allows access to Dragon level
6,9.	Yew Staff	+4 to Mana & Dispell spell

Notes relating to the Firestaff

Balance is the ultimate good. "ZOKATHRA", might create a plasma that could burn through the Amalgum encasing the gem. Once Fluxcaged, a being can be transmuted by the power of the staff which should always be used for good. The Firestaff can contain a being of pure alignment with its Fluxcage. I fear for the people of the world, should the Firestaff and Power get into the wrong hands. I have given the Firestaff much power, power to do and undo, power to break and mend. The power gem is sealed in the mountain by a strange magical force. Neither Chaos nor Order is truly balanced. The Firestaff can restore balance or destroy it.

Finally, 'thank you' to: S.Bedford, F.Beilby, J.Chearman, D.Edmonds, R.Harding, A.Jackson, E.Kyle-Dunbar, I. "Bonk!" Martin, G.Morgans, "Muncher", S.Oakman, S.Pierce, I.Robinson, O.Rooth, A.Soloman, A.Spiers, J.Taylor, J.Williams and a BIG 'thank you' to K.Hammond and M.Cooper.

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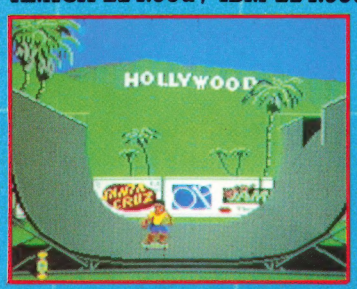

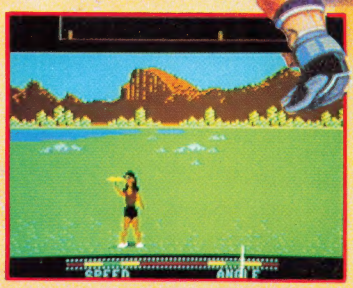

Screen shots from CBM 64/128 version.

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